Commentary

VOLUME NINETY-SIX • NUMBER TWO • AUGUST 1993

Yes and No to the Holocaust Museums
Edward Norden

What the Sex Educators Teach
Dana Mack

The Case Against Anita Hill
Terry Eastland

New Looks at American Jewish History
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Shultz, Reagan, and the Revisionists
George Weigel

Immigration—An Exchange
Francis Fukuyama & Critics

Lament of a Clinton Supporter

Joshua Muravchik

Books in Review: Patrick Glynn / Allan Nadler / Walter Berns / Laurie Mylroie / Arch Puddington

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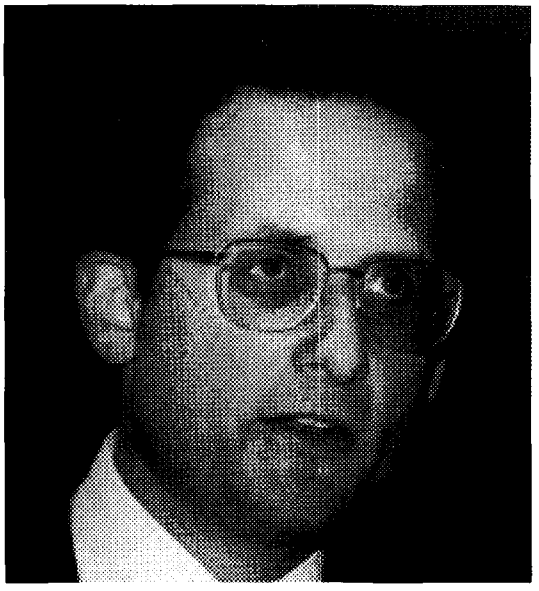
WHAT BEING JEWISH MEANS TO ME



Morris Smith
former Manager
Fidelity Magellan Fund

Last year, at the age of 34, I made the decision to leave the world of money management and spend a year in Israel together with my wife Devora and our four children. After 10 years in the investment management business - all at Fidelity Investments - I resigned as manager of the Fidelity Magellan Fund, the nation's largest stock mutual fund. I left Fidelity to put more of my energy and time into two pursuits which are at the core of Jewish existence: the study of Torah and the education and enjoyment of my family.

As I join my fellow Jews in strengthening the sovereign Jewish State, I find Israel enables me to continue developing the spiritual aspect of my being, an aspect which helps me appreciate fully the precious gift of Torah that is the Jewish people's unique heritage.

The practice of Judaism and the study of our religious tradition have provided me with the guidance I need in conducting my personal and professional life. Our Torah, given to the Jewish people by God as a sacred trust more than three millennia ago, has preserved and protected us throughout our wanderings and persecution and will always remain the foundation of our people in the future. To me, Judaism and our Torah have the power to enhance our relationship both to God and to our fellow human beings. It directs us to integrate religion and ethics into one whole. In the words of the rabbis,"If there is no ethical behavior, there is no Torah."

Israel and Judaism are my connection to past and future. It is the tradition and culture passed down to me by my parents, and it is what I hope to transmit to my children. In a society where "popular" cultural values often distort and destroy standards of morality, Judaism preserves the authentic values and morality of an ancient but ever-new way of life. Being Jewish continually reminds me that ultimate values are spiritual and ethical in nature. Material success can be, at most, only a means in pursuit of transcendent goals.

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Letters from Readers

Immigration

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In his otherwise illuminating article, "Immigrants and Family Values" [May], Francis Fukuyama totally misstates my position on employer sanctions in U.S. immigration law.

Contrary to his assertion, I have never authored legislation "strengthening" such sanctions. In fact, I have been on the record since 1986, when these provisions first became law, as actively seeking their repeal.

In my view, employer sanctions are ineffective and unsound. They have given rise to a booming trade in phony documentation. They force employers to play a law-enforcement role, which businesses are ill-equipped to do. Moreover, the evidence shows that these sanctions lead to hiring discrimination against Americans with Asian or Hispanic backgrounds by employers trying to avoid the risk of lawsuit or liability.

Apart from this error regarding my views, I wish to commend Mr. Fukuyama for his perceptive analysis of the social effects of immigration. Far from acting as a source of weakness, immigration enriches and strengthens American society, both economically and culturally.

[Senator] ORRIN G. HATCH
United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I know COMMENTARY readers expect red blood in these columns, but I wimpishly thought that Francis Fukuyama's article, occasioned in part by my *National Review* cover story on immigration, was very reasonable. It was certainly a welcome change from the grumpiness exhibited by many intellectuals, not least conservative intellectuals, when forced to think beyond the Ellis Island clichés that have paralyzed the immigration debate for a generation.

Mr. Fukuyama made some equally welcome and important concessions to what he (rather alarmingly) calls "the Brimelow-Buchanan argument." Thus he admits that the current low-skill influx tends to exacerbate the economic plight of low-skilled Americans; that the local impact of immigration can be negative; that official bilingualism is becoming entrenched. Above all, he concedes that the historical American polity has been not just a procedural abstraction but also an ethnocultural—he says "Christian Anglo-Saxon"—community. These concessions are critical, because they inevitably raise the logical possibility that the blessings of immigration may be finite.

I must, however, correct one serious factual error. Mr. Fukuyama too quickly accepts the claim that "neither the absolute nor the relative levels of immigration over the past decade are inordinately high by historical standards." In reality, including illegals, absolute levels of immigration have matched and exceeded the previous record set in 1901-10. And current immigration is also high relative to the native-born American fertility rate—which of course has collapsed since the turn of the century.

Unless these facts are grasped, the extraordinary nature of the current U.S. immigration situation cannot be understood. For, although Mr. Fukuyama does not acknowledge it, the current influx is unique in that it consists overwhelmingly of visible minorities. And, because of those low native-born fertility rates, this is shifting the ethnic balance quickly—from nearly 90-percent white in 1960 to less than 75-percent white in 1990. Plausible scenarios suggest that whites will verge on a minority within the lifetime of children now born. There is no precedent for a country undergoing such a rapid and radical transformation of its ethnic character in the entire history of the world.

Some COMMENTARY readers will be stirring uneasily at this point. They are used to regarding any mention of race as "racist." But the onus should not be on the critics of current policy to explain their motives. Instead, supporters of current policy must explain why they wish to transform the American nation as it had evolved by 1965.

For it cannot be repeated too often, although Mr. Fukuyama again does not acknowledge it at all, that the current influx is entirely the result of public policy. It is public policy, in the shape of

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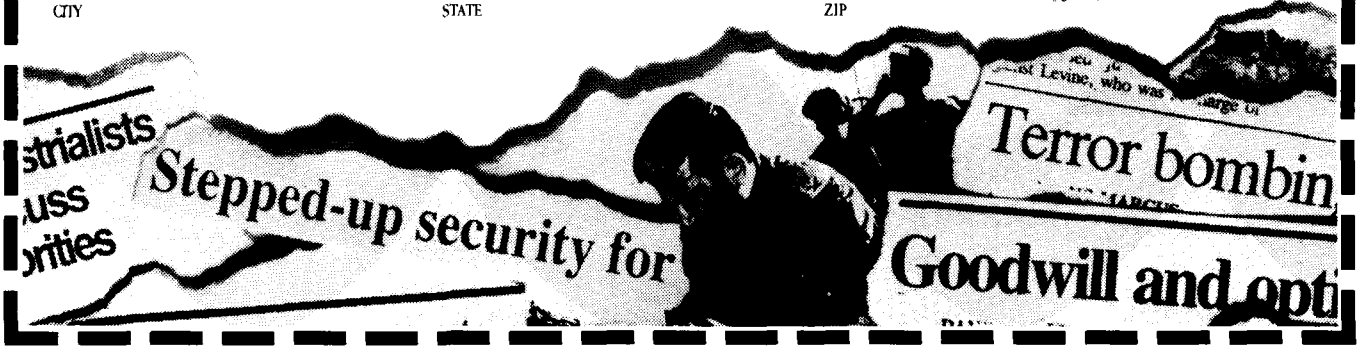

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the 1965 Immigration Act and subsequent amendments, that has permitted the current high level of immigration, degraded skill levels by placing "family reunification" above economic considerations, and effectively discriminated against Europe in favor of parts of the third world.

As Mr. Fukuyama acidly notes, American intellectuals readily spout Civics-101 justifications of immigration in principle. But this has little to do with current immigration policy in practice. Ironically, Mr. Fukuyama himself makes this mistake in commenting on the celebrated controversy about whether a million Englishmen or Zulus would assimilate faster into Virginia. He suggests that a million Taiwanese would "work harder" than either. Maybe so. But should he not then advocate letting them in, rather than the million or so Mexicans and other Hispanics who now arrive here yearly? In other words, reorient current policy toward East Asia rather than Latin America?

This brings me to Mr. Fukuyama's contention, which I regard as his article's strained framework rather than its thoughtful core, that immigrants bring desirable "family values" and are therefore not the enemy in Patrick J. Buchanan's "cultural war." Mr. Fukuyama admits but does not discuss in detail the large differences in this regard among current immigrant groups—although this again raises the logical possibility that some might be better excluded.

Moreover, Mr. Fukuyama's rather odd way of approaching the immigration issue obscures a key point: it is entirely possible that an immigrant group could have splendid "family values" and still not assimilate well. For example, it could be impossibly alienated from the host community, perhaps because of the psychological stress of being a distinct minority. It could be systematically criminal, perhaps because of a distressing historical experience with authority, like the Iraqi Christians who heroically run Detroit's convenience stores and much of its organized crime besides. And finally, of course, the family-valuing immigrant group might just plain not be Americans—which is perhaps what Mr. Fukuyama is hinting about the Hispanic concentrations of the Southwest.

Mr. Fukuyama paraphrases an argument from my *National Review* article: even if the immigrants are not responsible for "our anti-assimilationist multiculturalism," we need not pour more oil on burning water by allowing more in. He counters that this argument can be "reversed": if immigration were stopped, and even reversed, the problem would remain—because it proceeds from a degenerate American elite. Agreed. But this hardly "reverses" my argument. It just restates it. The problem, however caused, may be exacerbated by immigration. Stopping immigration, therefore, could help.

Finally: I still do not agree with Mr. Fukuyama that the "basic complaint" of my *National Review* article was cultural (although I must admit I appear to be outvoted on that point). I think it was about economics. Referring to the technical economic literature on accounting for growth, I showed that increases in labor are always only a minor component in increased output. Ideas matter more. In other words, immigration is simply not an economic necessity for the U.S. It must be justified on political grounds. I doubt that Mr. Fukuyama would claim he has made that, much more ambitious, case.

As I said in my *National Review* article, mass immigration into the U.S. has been a triumphant success. But for very specific reasons—many of which (such as an official will to assimilate) no longer apply. The possibility must be faced that it is time to resupply another of those reasons: a pause, of years, or even decades, for digestion.

PETER BRIMELOW
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Francis Fukuyama makes a number of persuasive points in "Immigrants and Family Values." He is entirely correct to attack nativists like Patrick J. Buchanan who conceive of America as "a Christian, ethnically European nation." However, in trying to rebut the prejudices of the nativist Right, Mr. Fukuyama makes an equally big mistake: he caricatures native-born white Americans while romanticizing Hispanic immigrants.

Immigrants from the third world, he argues, "have stronger family values than white, middle-class, suburban Americans, while their work ethic and willingness to defer to traditional sources of authority" are also greater. Mr. Fukuyama neglects to consider the possibility that blind "deference to traditional sources of authority" like state and church are impediments to liberal democracy and flourishing capitalism. With regard to the premodern, anti-feminist "family values" that Mr. Fukuyama (now *following* Buchanan) endorses, it is worth listening to the Latin America expert, Lawrence Harrison: "A principal element of Hispanic culture is familism—emphasis on the interests of the family to the exclusion of the community and country." Is the mafia-like clan morality that Edward Banfield described as "amoral familism" and identified as a major cause of underdevelopment in the third world really the kind of ethic that we want in an open, advanced society?

This assumes, of course, that the "family values" of Mexican immigrants really are stronger than those of white Americans. Mr. Fukuyama's own data, however, demonstrate that native-born white Americans have much stronger families than Latin American immigrants in general, and Mexican immigrants in particular. According to Mr. Fukuyama, "Mexican-origin Latinos," with an out-of-wedlock birth rate of 28.9 percent, are *more than twice as likely* as allegedly decadent white Americans to have illegitimate children (the white rate is 13.9 percent). What is more, he concedes that almost twice as many Hispanic families (24.4 percent) as white families (13.5 percent) are headed by a single female parent. Since white families are manifestly much stronger than Hispanic families, Mr. Fukuyama's strained attempt to indict suburban whites by associating their divorce and illegitimacy rates with those of inner-city blacks—"what has happened among blacks is only an extreme extension of a process that has been proceeding apace among whites as well"—is utterly unconvincing.

In contrasting hard-working, devout, family-loving Hispanic immigrants with "white, middle-class, suburban Americans," or "Wasps," supposedly sinking into ethical "decay," Mr. Fukuyama also leaves out some readily available information that refutes his thesis. According to 1988 U.S. Census data,

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foreign-born Americans are 25 percent more likely than native-born Americans to be on welfare. When we turn to education, we find that white Americans are far more studious than even second- and third-generation Mexican-Americans. Linda Chavez, in *Out of the Barrio*, notes that the drop-out rate for third-generation Hispanic Americans is 29 percent, compared to only 10 percent for non-Hispanic whites. In 1988, the overall Hispanic dropout rate was three times greater than that of non-Hispanic whites (and twice that of black students). Hispanics are also considerably more likely than native-born white Americans to be in trouble with the law. In Colorado, where only 11 percent of the population is Hispanic, Hispanics account for a quarter of the prison population.

Hispanic immigrants, even in the second and third generation, are significantly more likely than white Americans (and East Asian immigrants) to drop out of school, go on welfare, and end up in jail, notwithstanding their (exaggerated) greater "family values" and the (equally exaggerated) moral rot "right in the heart of American's well-established white, Anglo-Saxon community." For the nativist caricature of third-world immigrants, Mr. Fukuyama substitutes an equally inaccurate and insulting caricature of native-born white Americans sunk in decadence and indolence. Mr. Fukuyama worries that "the immigrants will be corrupted by" white American habits. Since those habits include far higher rates of school completion and dramatically lower rates of illegitimacy, female-headed families, welfare dependence, and criminality, I for one hope that the immigrants are indeed "corrupted," and soon.

MICHAEL LIND

National Interest
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

After two years of increasingly frank and public debate on immigration, including Peter Brimelow's massive challenge to the neoconservative pro-immigration position in *National Review* last year, one might have supposed that COMMENTARY would respond with an article on the subject that would go beyond the familiar open-borders clichés. Instead, COMMENTARY has offered up Francis Fuku-

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"Greater Israel"

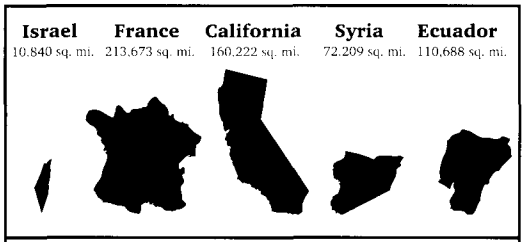
Does it have any relation to reality?

In May of 1989, James Baker, declared in an address to AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee) that the Jewish state should once and for all forget about "the dream of a greater Israel". It was the first time that this phrase had been heard from the lips of a Western statesman. What does it mean? Does it have any relation to reality?

What are the facts?

Stripes on the flag. Arab propaganda has it that the two stripes on the flag of Israel, above and below the star of David, represent the Nile and the Euphrates River, respectively, and signify Israel's expansionist desire to form an empire that would supposedly reach from Cairo to Baghdad. But that has no basis in fact, of course. Nowhere in any documents of the Jewish state, in any statement by even the most "radical" spokesman can any reference to anything like that be found.

Israel's Borders. "Palestine", part of the Ottoman Empire before World War I, came under British mandate after that war. The Golan Heights were part of Palestine. Israel's current borders are the result of the 1948 War of Independence, in which six Arab armies invaded the new-born state, but were utterly defeated, and the 1967 Six-Day War, in which those same armies once again invaded Israel. In that war, Israel conquered the Gaza Strip, the vast Sinai Peninsula, and the Golan Heights. And Israel also *repossessed* the provinces of Judea/Samaria, (the "West Bank"), and the eastern part of Jerusalem, which had been occupied by the Jordanians nineteen years earlier when they invaded the just new-born Jewish state. In order to achieve peace with Egypt, Israel returned to it all of the Sinai. Israel is and has always been prepared to grant full autonomy to the Arabs living in Judea/Samaria. It is clear to all knowledgeable in military matters that, for immutable strategic reasons, Israel cannot for any foreseeable future abandon or yield military control of Judea/Samaria and of the Golan Heights.



Greater Israel? It's a myth. See for yourself!

The Myth of Greater Israel. Israel is one of the smallest countries in the world. Most people don't realize how small it really is. One wonders whether former Secretary of State Baker was aware of it when he uttered his memorable phrase of "Greater Israel". A look at the map is revealing. Including the vaunted "West Bank", the Gaza Strip and the Golan Heights, the entire area of the country is barely over 10,000 square miles. France is twenty times as large as Israel, California fifteen times as large, Syria about seven times as large, and "tiny" Ecuador ten times as large. Israel is so small that its area is less than half the size of San Bernadino County, California; if it were dropped into Lake Michigan it would disappear from sight without a trace. The Arab countries in contrast are huge—they occupy twice the area of the United States.

It is clear that the concept of "Greater Israel", lacks any validity and has no basis in fact. To apply such a concept to a country as small as Israel would almost seem a mockery. Obviously, Israel has no territorial ambitions. All it wants is to live in peace within secure and defensible borders, just as any other country and as required under U.N. Resolution No. 242. But it seems that the *size* of Israel, whether "greater" or "lesser" is not at all the concern of Israel's implacable Arab enemies. The very *existence* of Israel, of a Jewish state in their midst of whatever size, is unacceptable to the Arabs. And unless that mindset changes, not until the Arab states have become democracies and have come to full acceptance of Israel, are willing to make *true* peace with it, and are prepared to establish normal and friendly relations with Israel can any possible territorial adjustment be considered. As it looks right now, that may still take some time.

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yama's complacent and vapid treatment of the issue. Mr. Fukuyama's denial of reality is almost total: at this late date, with immigration-related problems tearing up communities all over the country, he blandly refuses to concede that immigration—even illegal immigration—represents *any* problem at all for America.

Even the one instance where Mr. Fukuyama admits a flaw in the pro-immigration ideology turns out to be a finesse. He acknowledges that America is not simply based on belief in universalist ideas about democracy, but that America is also a *culture*, even a "Christian, Anglo-Saxon" culture. This *appears* to be a major concession to those conservatives who insist on American cultural particularity, especially as regards immigration policy. But then Mr. Fukuyama does a very strange thing. He identifies the essence of this newly discovered American culture as "family values," i.e., as a set of behaviors which promote economic productivity, and which can be expressed with lots of statistics. In other words, Mr. Fukuyama, having conceded that America is not just a political abstraction but a culture, reinterprets that culture itself as an abstraction.

He then devotes the rest of his article to demonstrating the good "family values" of current immigrants. He cites studies showing that Mexican-Americans have more family cohesion than do whites, with higher birth-weight babies even among low-income mothers due to taboos on smoking, drinking, and drug use during pregnancy; and so on.

Mr. Fukuyama's argument is deceptive on two counts. First, the immigration critics are not concerned about protecting American "family values" from immigrants, as he alleges, but about maintaining a common national culture. Mexicans might have the most stable, loving families in the world and still not be *Americans*. When the Hispanic population of San José, California, demonstrated against a statue that portrayed the raising of the American flag in California during the Mexican war, calling the statue a "symbol of conquest" and threatening violence if it were erected, the issue was not the birth weight of their babies, but their national identity. When the Cubans who dominate Dade County, Florida, voted recently to overturn the laws declaring English to be the sole language of government, the issue was not the cohesiveness of Hispanic families, but the dispossession of the English language in this country by an even more numerous and powerful Spanish-speaking community.

Second, "family values" can be very different things in different cultures. As Lawrence Harrison has shown, Latin American families have an intense family loyalty and a lack of trust toward those outside the family circle—the results of which can be seen in the unhappy political history of Latin America. Many Asians also come from cultures with fierce family loyalties and deeply ingrained habits of corruption. By contrast, as Tocqueville argued, the American family was the seedbed of social cooperativeness and good citizenship.

Mr. Fukuyama shows his complete ignorance of the real dimensions of the immigration problem in his sappy comments about illegal aliens. For Mr. Fukuyama, illegal immigrants hanging out on street corners looking for day labor are a manifestation of the "family values" that made America, and should be celebrated. Tell that to the residents of Orange, California, where Mexican illegals are living 30 people to a house and are destroying the fabric of the community. Or tell it to the beleaguered residents of Los Angeles, who rush indoors before sundown on July 4th because the Mexican illegals in Los Angeles—doubtless in an outburst of family values—celebrate American Independence Day by firing guns in the air. Yet Mr. Fukuyama, in a fit of PC-speak, smears conservative Republicans as "nativist" for advocating effective border enforcement in the 1992 Republican platform.

Mr. Fukuyama approvingly cites the free-market economist Julian Simon's ridiculous canard that current levels of immigration are not "inordinately high by historical standards." Anyone with the slightest knowledge of immigration history knows that these so-called "historical standards" of Simon's are derived from one or two decades of record-high immigration at the turn of the 20th century. Indeed, the high influx of that period created intense social and political upheavals that were only laid to rest by the severe immigration restrictions of 1921 and 1924. The illogic (not to mention the dishonesty) of presenting that singular period in American immigration history as typical—even as a guide for all future immigration policy—should be too obvious to require further comment.

LAWRENCE AUSTER
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In "Immigrants and Family Values," Francis Fukuyama's real purpose is clear: he wants to derail any serious discussion of our nation's future immigration policy. He calls it a "waste of time and energy."

Mr. Fukuyama tries to assure us that, despite a breakdown in traditional values among Americans, today's immigrants possess all the old ideals that made America great: work hard, cheap, and want better things for the children. . . .

Unlike Julian Simon, who calls for unlimited immigration, Mr. Fukuyama uses no numbers—none at all. He fails to mention that the U.S. will take in twice as many immigrants in 1993 alone as came during the entire colonial era.

If immigration is so high that it literally overtakes the anchor population, how can we reasonably expect the latest immigrants willingly to subordinate their political and cultural ideas to our own? . . .

Mr. Fukuyama says we should "force" immigrants to assimilate. How? By what means? Through "modern pop and consumer culture," periodic bribes, or physical force? And if they are already bringing with them the tools to be a part of the *Gemeinschaft* (community), then why must they be forced to assimilate at all? His discussion reveals the typical flaws of a social scientist who tries to analyze immigration without any understanding of its underlying policy, history, or law. By avoiding any description of how different immigrants arrived here in the past (which often is a determinant of post-arrival success or failure), he feels free to embark on utopian character references on behalf of twenty million immigrants.

But all that is secondary. Mr. Fukuyama's objective, rather, is to derail any serious discussion among conservatives about who should enter this country, on what terms, and by what rules. This will

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absolve the neoconservatives from engaging in any nasty immigration-related debates.

DAN STEIN
Federation for American
Immigration Reform—FAIR
Washington, D.C.

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Thank you, thank you for Francis Fukuyama's article. It crystallizes what I have been trying to say to my Republican pro-family friends. The immigrants are not crawling under fences and across the desert so that they can get NEA grants to create homosexual pornography. They are coming here for our historic economic and political blessings, blessings which we natives seem to want to throw away. . . .

Mr. Fukuyama could have mentioned the 1920's, when the Republican party . . . turned nativist and lost the children of the immigrants of that day to the Democrats and Franklin D. Roosevelt. The Republicans have had to make the greatest efforts to win them back. The world we live in now, because of the immigrants and for other reasons, is more like the early years of this century than like the 50's and 60's. Republicans and conservatives will not doom themselves by choosing traditional values. They will doom themselves if they choose nativism. . . .

HOWARD AHMANSON
Irvine, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

While reading Francis Fukuyama's article, I was overcome with a feeling of elation. Mr. Fukuyama discussed both sides of the issue very cogently and pointed out that the myth that third-world immigration is a threat to family values is false. . . .

I am saddened when it dawns upon me that some people feel superior to others. . . . Perhaps the few individuals who feel this way should review the foundations of the United States as expressed in the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence. . . .

One hopes Mr. Fukuyama's article will awaken other Americans as well.

KALPITA PATEL
Chicago, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

. . . Surely Francis Fukuyama is correct in stating that the central issue in the immigration question is not one of trying to keep the newcomers out, but rather hinges on the larger dilemma of assimilation itself. Whether, in his words, "there is enough to our Western, rational, egalitarian, democratic civilization to force those coming to the country to absorb its language and rules. . . ."

And although he did not take it upon himself to answer that question directly in his article, the reply, as revealed by events in our country over the past 25 years, has to be a definite if qualified no. For all the merits of our Western civilization, it is certainly not enough, in and of itself, . . . to present much of an attraction these days to anyone, save for some desiccated old-line liberals.

Even among current liberals of the reenergized New Left—the very people who have carried these Enlightenment precepts of rationalism, liberty, and egalitarianism to their ironically dark extremes of radical feminism, forced quotas, and a wholesale retreat from the very notions of objective values, authority, and merit—this platform inspires only a partial allegiance. . . .

The problems of nihilism and dissociation . . . that we encounter today are debilitating to our society at all levels. And since these problems are fundamentally cultural, they cannot be solved from either side of the political spectrum. What is needed is a purification and renewal involving our hearts, souls, and spirits, as well as our minds. . . .

By this measure, it is our current majority culture that needs to do the assimilating and take in those healthier influences that can help us to break this impasse. And even if it is ultimately a spiritual problem, the answer must take root on the practical and material level where our daily lives are lived. So if our regeneration does not begin with how we approach the issue of work, it must certainly make its presence felt there. And it is here I feel that neoconservatives (if they wish to make a contribution to this American renaissance beyond the routine pillorying of the permissive ideology of the Left) will have to come to terms with their own dark little secret: that in making a legitimate defense of free-market capitalism, there is often the refusal to confront the destructive aspects of our present speculative and consumer-driven economy. . . .

In this sense, our economy and business climate as presently construed are also part and parcel of America's decline, along with the corrosive immorality of the Left. And to right our course we need to assimilate—both from our own repressed republican traditions and from the present successes of the Japanese and East Asian economies in general—those virtues that can help rehabilitate the work ethic. . . . This will be no mean feat, since many of us are still fighting the last war, and would rather flay a vanquished socialism than face up to the full measure of our present difficulties. However, unless we meet that challenge, the direction of our historic decline is clear: as clear as the almost 400-percent decline in the value of our currency relative to the Japanese yen over the last 30 years, and the more than 100-percent decline in its worth over the last ten. . . .

LEONARD BAKKER
Berkeley, California

FRANCIS FUKUYAMA writes:

Senator Orrin Hatch obviously knows his own positions on im-

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migration better than I do, and I apologize if I misrepresented them. I am very glad to know that he believes that immigration "enriches and strengthens American society, both economically and culturally."

While I disagree with various aspects of Peter Brimelow's argument, I think he should be commended for bringing up the cultural issue raised by immigration, not through innuendo but in an explicit and thoughtful way. But his arguments about the shifting racial and ethnic character of the United States (declining from 90- to 75-percent white between 1960 and 1990) do not scare me the way they do him. The category "white" is a very strange and expansive one, used by the Census Bureau to designate anyone who is neither black nor Hispanic. This includes Anglo-Saxons, Germans, Italians, Poles, Jews, Irish, Croats, and, in many census studies, Asians and Middle Easterners as well. The great dilution of our original Puritan Anglo-Saxon culture and ethnic base happened long ago, as turn-of-the-18th-century fears of German immigration, or Know-Nothing attacks on Irish immigration, or early-20th-century fears of Jewish and Italian immigration testify. Wasps for several decades have constituted only one-twentieth of the population of New York City, a figure that might once have caused panic but now is scarcely noticed.

The fact that all these different groups, which in Europe were culturally quite distinct, are now lumped together as "white," is testimony to the flexibility and universality of that original Wasp culture. I don't know whether the Irish, Jews, or Italians were less visible as minorities when *they* arrived than are Latinos today. And provided—and this is admittedly a big "if"—we do not destroy that assimilation engine through misguided multiculturalist policies, there is no reason why those Latinos will not be counted as "whites" themselves in a generation or two.

On the other hand, Mr. Brimelow and other critics of immigration have raised some very valid points about serious problems in our current immigration policy. It is crazy, for example, that the courts have extended educational, welfare, and other benefits to noncitizens. Welfare benefits, in particular, hurt the very groups they are meant to help by encouraging dependency; that is the only reason I can think of to explain the relatively poor performance of Puerto Ricans as compared to other Latino immigrant groups.

Michael Lind, Mr. Brimelow, and Lawrence Auster all make a similar point—namely, that strong family values alone do not constitute a "culture," and that there are many other important cultural traits as well, such as beliefs about education, the work ethic, self-reliance, attitudes toward authority, and the like that determine an immigrant group's ultimate assimilability.

This I concede to be true, and in this respect I am not trying to romanticize Latinos. It is quite clear that present-day immigrants will vary greatly in the rate at which they assimilate and rise economically. It is unlikely, for example, that Latinos are going to do nearly as well as German-, Jewish-, or Chinese-Americans before them.

It is probably appropriate to compare present-day Mexican immigrants to the several million southern Italians of peasant background who flooded into the United States in the late-19th and early-20th centuries. This wave of Italian immigrants came with less than ideal cultural baggage: many did in fact suffer from what Edward Banfield (as cited by Mr. Lind) called an "amoral familism" that retarded mobility and educational achievement. Italians, like Mexicans today, had higher rates of truancy, crime, and educational failure than other immigrant groups; they had a knack for organized crime; and their integration into American society was much slower and more painful than for German or Jewish immigrants. Many, moreover, planned not to become U.S. citizens but to return to Italy. And yet today Italian-Americans rank higher than "native" Anglo-Saxons in terms of per-capita income and other measures of socioeconomic success. (Indeed, by most measures Anglo-Saxons rank only above the Irish among European immigrant groups.) Who would argue in retrospect that our country would be better off had we kept these "amoral-familist" Italians out, back in the 1890's? I see no reason why Mexican-Americans should not follow the Italian trajectory, with the caveat that they, unlike the Italians, will be disadvantaged by misguided welfare policies and bilingual education.

On a somewhat smaller point, Mr. Lind, who is usually a careful reader of manuscripts (my own, in the past, included), should have noted that I stated clearly in my article that *if you adjust for income level*, the rates of single-parent families for whites and Latinos are very similar. Both are considerably lower than for blacks at the same income level, and if you factor out the troubled Puerto Rican community, Mexicans and Cubans have lower single-parent family rates than whites.

I appreciate Howard Ahmanson's comments and those of Kalpita Patel; the same cannot be said of Lawrence Auster or of Dan Stein, of the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR). It does not surprise me that more immigrants will enter the U.S. in 1993 than in the entire colonial era; in 1790 the *total* population of the United States was only 3.9 million people. With the exception of the quality of our national leadership, everything—from immigration to GNP to the deficit—is greater today than it was then. On the other hand, the rate of immigration over the past decade is not *substantially* higher in either absolute or relative terms than it was in the years between 1880 and 1923. Mr. Auster makes the correct point that this period was a rather anomalous one in our national history with regard to the rate of immigration. But is he expressing regret that we let those people in back then? I am not one of those people who celebrates "diversity" for its own sake; indeed, many of our social problems stem from the fact that we are too diverse to feel a sense of community with one another. But critics of immigration like Mr. Auster evidence no appreciation for the positive contributions that each wave of immigrants has made to American life or realize that the old elites get tired and need periodic renewal from abroad.

In response to Mr. Stein's question of how we can "force" people to assimilate, the answer is to do what we did routinely in the past: make immigrants learn English, force them to rely on themselves rather than on the government for economic advancement, reverse recent trends toward bilingualism and multiculturalism in the pub-

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lic-school system, and restore the idea that our rational, universalistic democratic culture, while tolerant, is *superior* to the various particularistic cultures that immigrants bring with them. To achieve this will require a long, grinding campaign, part of the larger "culture war" to which Patrick Buchanan refers. Organizations like FAIR would achieve their objectives more readily by engaging these sorts of issues rather than lobbying for immigration quotas and more border police.

Finally, if I understand Leonard Bakker correctly, I would agree that there is a tension between contemporary capitalism and traditional conservative cultural values, a greater tension than most American (though not necessarily European) conservatives would admit. The tremendous engine of "creative destruction" represented by modern capitalism levels everything before it, not just industrial dinosaurs like IBM and Sears but neighborhoods, families, concepts of work, religious attachments, and the like. I would not go so far as Mr. Bakker in saying that this leaves nothing that would appeal in our current society except to a bunch of "desiccated old-line liberals": I for one really like the fact that I can now own my own Sun work station, and I am sure that I would hate living in most traditional third-world societies where the bonds of community and morality are much tighter. But it is certainly legitimate to ask what we can do, in the context of such a capitalist society, to preserve some greater measure of community and moral obligation. In this respect, I think that observation of the traditional/modern synthesis that has been achieved in certain Asian societies might help us reclaim some of our own traditional pre-modern and pre-liberal cultural heritage.

D'Amato & the Jewish Vote

To the Editor of Commentary:

Having done my own analyses of Jewish voting in presidential elections since 1972, I found Jay P. Lefkowitz's "Jewish Voters and the Democrats" [April] compelling and the figures cited generally accurate. However, Mr. Lefkowitz's references to Senator Alfonse D'Amato's win in New York over a Jewish candidate gave insufficient attention to D'Amato's service on two key appropriations subcommittees affecting Israel—Foreign Operations and Defense. It was both D'Amato's strong pro-Israel public statements and his activities in these two key subcommittees which caused many traditional Jewish Democrats (and almost all of the pro-Israel PAC's) to back him solidly. D'Amato's family-leave vote cited by Mr. Lefkowitz as a reason for Jewish support was, by comparison, inconsequential in gaining the 30-percent or so Jewish "swing vote"—the vote that swings on the issue of Israel's security.

Over the years D'Amato has proven himself to be more consistently supportive and outspoken on Israel-related issues than most of his Jewish Senate colleagues—a track record which has not gone unnoticed both here in Washington and in his home state as well.

Morris J. Amitay
Washington, D.C.

Jay P. Lefkowitz writes:

While I did not specifically mention Senator D'Amato's service on the Foreign Operations and Defense appropriations subcommittees, I did state that most of the Senator's popularity in the Jewish community is a result of his "having built a strong reputation as one of Israel's best friends in Congress." Moreover, I pointed out that D'Amato's Jewish vote count more than quadrupled between his first and second Senate elections—largely based on his pro-Israel record. By 1992, when D'Amato's pro-Israel bona-fides could not be challeneged, he had to find other issues of concern to Jewish voters to push his Jewish vote count even higher. It was to this end that he studiously avoided talking to Jewish voters about abortion and instead advertised his votes on more liberal issues such as "family leave."

Mr. Amitay also asserts that about 30 percent of the Jewish vote "swings on the issue of Israel's security." But the 1992 presidential election proves him wrong. Although Jews fled the Republican party in droves, their desertion was driven primarily by the perception that the Republican party had been "captured" by the religious Right and by the derogatory tone of some of Bush's statements about Israel, rather than by genuine concerns about the security of Israel. In reality, Israel was more secure in 1992 than it had been in 1988, in large part because of actions taken by George Bush.

Family Values

To the Editor of Commentary:

In James Q. Wilson's otherwise lucid article, "The Family-Values Debate" [April], he states:

> When the people who deliver mocking attacks on "traditional family values" are the same ones who endorse condom distribution among elementary-school children, the average parent is led to wonder whether he or she is being a sucker for trying to stay together and raise the kids.

What does this sentence mean? What is the unstated premise? Are suporters of traditional family values supposed to be against birth-control and family-planning information in schools? What is the link between condoms and responsible parenthood? Doesn't Mr. Wilson have it backward? Isn't the use of condoms an act of responsibility consistent with wanted children and two-parent families? Isn't the absence of available birth-control devices like condoms conducive to the teenage motherhood which Mr. Wilson (I believe correctly) laments? Of course, "elementary school" here is meant to be provocative. Does Mr. Wilson mean to distinguish it from *high*-school distribution of condoms?

In that one sentence, alas, I suggest that Mr. Wilson flirts with a menu which is illogical and harmful: namely, two-parent families are significantly better than the alternatives and should be encouraged and supported; *therefore*, we should be anti-birth control (and, most likely, pro-life). This kind of neo-gnosticism is most unhelpful. What is wrong with sexually active teenagers responsibly avoiding pregnancy through their early and mid-twenties and then getting married and raising the wanted number of children within a two-parent family? The answer is: to some religious persons, sex is sin unless engaged in solely for procreative insemination—that's what's wrong. Fine, but let's not get that religious dogma mixed up with support for two-parent families.

James F. Kirkham
San Francisco, California

To the Editor of Commentary:

"What is at stake, of course, is the role of women," writes James

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Q. Wilson in "The Family-Values Debate." That, without question, is the crux of the matter. Not surprisingly, however, Mr. Wilson says little about this issue in his lengthy article, and does not even mention feminism. What is at stake, however, is not simply "the role of women," but, far more importantly, the ideals and goals of feminism, . . . and these ideas and goals are, quite simply, inimical to the family.

If left free to make uncoerced decisions, to lead private, autonomous lives and form private, autonomous families and communities, with a minimum of statist interference, the sexes will always behave differently and assume different "roles." The only way to make them . . . assume identical roles is by force.

Thus far at least, the feminists have been blessedly deprived of total power. Much as they might like to, they cannot literally prohibit women from marrying and having children; they cannot literally force wives and mothers to work outside the home full time; they cannot literally force women and girls to take on nontraditional roles and occupations. Given these limitations, the principal means whereby feminists have achieved the total "equality" they seek is through affirmative-action quotas and preferential treatment, educational thought control, media propaganda, and the suppression and censorship of "sexist" and antifeminist ideas, opinions, images, facts, etc. . . .

Full economic parity for women and the survival of the family are basically irreconcilable. Not only traditional sex roles, but also the two-parent family will never be revived as long as male wages continue to decline in relation to female wages, as long as the feminization of all areas of the workforce continues unabated, as long as there are more and more women with powerful, prestigious, high-paying, and nontraditional jobs and careers. And such trends will continue as long as feminism (or sexual egalitarianism) is the most pervasive and influential force in American culture and politics. . . .

SCOTT KUEHL
Green Bay, Wisconsin

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

James Q. Wilson's excellent discussion of the family-values debate seems to have omitted one important factor, the tax structure. I cannot help believing that the . . . destruction of the American family is, in part, directly related to the changing tax laws and the establishment of the marriage tax. It is economically advantageous not to be married. . . . If the President and Congress are sincere about strengthening the family, they could start by changing the tax laws. . . .

SHELDON F. GOTTLIEB
Mobile, Alabama

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

James Q. Wilson writes in his excellent article: "I sometimes wonder what would happen to family stability if every father knew for certain that, should the marriage end, he would have to take custody of the children. My guess is: more committed fathers." I too have toyed with this idea and have come to another two equally persuasive conclusions.

First of all, routine paternal-custody rulings would drastically reduce the number of divorce suits filed by mothers. (In Hungary, three out of four divorce suits are filed by women, but in only four out of 100 cases in which custody is contested is custody awarded to men.) While I agree with Mr. Wilson that such an arrangement would make for more committed fathers, I am not at all sure that their firmer commitment to fathering would invariably stop them from filing for divorce. However, the overall number of divorce suits would still drop significantly.

Secondly, under such an arrangement, children from marriages that had been terminated would be far more likely to continue in a virtual two-parent setup, since divorced custodial fathers have proven to be notably unpossessive about visitation rights, etc. Should they remarry, as they much more typically do than divorced mothers, the children would be more likely to have an adult of the other sex living permanently with them.

When one reflects on the virtues of this arrangement—the stability gained by fewer divorces to start with, added to the probable presence of adults of both sexes in the household—the situation at present is revealed for what it is: a caricature of stability in all meaningful respects. Male partners are cajoled into equal sharing only to be pushed out of it with massive juridical assistance. Can we seriously expect committed fathers or stable children from a social process whose sole, if undeclared, objective is keeping women politically contented?

MIKLÓS HERNADI
Budapest, Hungary

JAMES Q. WILSON writes:

James F. Kirkham worries that I am against birth control; I am not, nor are most supporters of the family. I *am* against the belief that the distribution of condoms is by itself a protector of the family, especially when that distribution is accompanied (as it often is in the schools) by the implicit, and sometimes explicit, argument that sexual activity is akin to athletic activity—as long as you protect yourself, whether with condoms or football helmets, it is harmless fun. That view is taken by the members of male posses to mean that sex is only about "scoring." I agree with Mr. Kirkham that the use of birth control is often consistent with avoiding unwanted children and single-parent families, but that consistency ought to be reinforced by the moral teaching that sexuality exists in order to perpetuate the species and is ennobled and given lasting meaning when it is accompanied by emotional commitment. (More women than men understand this; I think the women are right.) This teaching is often not part of school-based sexual instruction, for the same reason that almost any reference to morality is suspect to those teachers who feel that people have "values," not morals, and that the task of instruction is to "clarify" the former rather than instill the latter.

Scott Kuehl thinks that I understate the pernicious role of feminism; I think that he overstates it. Though some feminists may want to prohibit women from marrying and having children, I don't think most do, nor do I think that a decline in male wages relative to female ones signals the end of the family. My quarrel with some feminists is with the premise that young women are failures if they become mothers rather than careerists, the denial that any hard choices need be made in trying to do both, and the claim that marital relations are mainly about rights.

Sheldon F. Gottlieb takes me to task for having omitted the effect of taxes on family solidarity. I am unaware of any studies that show

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that the marriage tax leads to family break-up; if such evidence exists, we are in even worse shape than I thought. If it is the case that the decision to marry and stay married can be significantly influenced by the prospect of getting a few hundred dollars knocked off your tax bill, then we had better stop describing marriage as an institution and start talking about it as a shelter that has no more meaning than an IRA account. I don't think we are in that condition; no society could be, and still persist.

Furtwängler

To the Editor of Commentary:

Samuel Lipman's fine article, "Furtwängler and the Nazis" [March], sensitive and balanced in its attempt to be understanding of the great musician's contribution to culture, was for me a nostalgia trip back to the days of the controversy. The fact that Wilhelm Furtwängler saved "a few Jews," his undisputed greatness in music, and all his other fine attributes paled in the face of his willingness to play the "*Kultur* and Fatherland" game to promote his philosophy that "Art cannot be placed at the service of public life. It must be left as it is, its materials . . . the great primal forces. . . ."

In 1955 I wrote to the maestro Pablo Casals in Perpignan, and asked his opinion on the question that had agitated our musical community for several years: should Furtwängler be allowed to perform in America in light of his past? I also told Casals of my disillusionment with Albert Schweitzer who served a minute portion of humanity in the tiny village of Lambaréné in Africa, but never raised his voice to speak out against the Nazis. . . . How did Casals feel about Schweitzer's silence when raising his voice might have enlisted his moral standing in the fight against Hitler? Casals responded immediately and warmly by citing a passage from the book, *Conversations with Pablo Casals*, which had just been published. The passage reads as follows:

> *Interviewer*: Furtwängler came to see you in Zurich, did he not?
>
> *Casals*: Yes, it was immediately after the Nazi collapse and Furtwängler found himself a refugee in Switzerland. He came to me. I didn't presume then or ever to accuse, but I did not wish to extend a moral shield to anyone. Let each person deal with his conscience. That is my way. With a file of papers in his hand, Furtwängler told me how he'd protected Jews, etc. [I told him that] it isn't necessary that you give me explanations because I don't interfere one way or another. . . . Have patience and be hopeful for the time when the Swiss will open doors for you. You know well in what high regard, musically, I hold Furtwängler. But in my opinion, the greater the personality, the more he is responsible for all his actions.
>
> *Interviewer*: What was your reaction when Nazis started the persecutions?
>
> *Casals*: When I saw that Einstein, Thomas Mann, Bruno Walter, and so many illustrious scientists and artists had to flee into exile, . . . I believed it was my duty to protest. And I declared that I would no longer return to Germany until artistic and intellectual liberty would be established. . . . Political functions are not the area for the artist, but in my opinion, he has the obligation to participate with all the sacrifices implied, when the cause is human dignity. . . .

Casals's answer, in all its simplicity and love for humanity, is a relevant blueprint for all people in all ages.

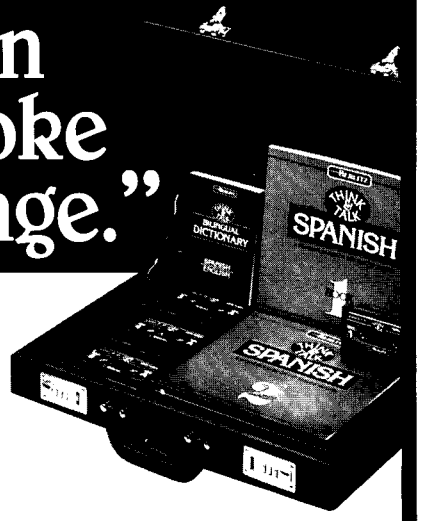
Rebecca Segal Hurowitz
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

To the Editor of Commentary:

Samuel Lipman's perceptive article was very meaningful for me because of Mr. Lipman's mention of Hans Rosbaud among the "lesser names" of conductors who played a role in German music in the 20's. However, I found grating Mr. Lipman's use of the adjective "distinguished" in connection with Karl Boehm. True, Boehm is better known than his fellow townsman Rosbaud (they were both born in Graz), but in his behavior toward the Nazis he was certainly less distinguished.

Some years ago, while researching my book, *The Griffin*, a biography of Hans Rosbaud's brother Paul, I spent much time wandering the streets of Graz, searching for traces of the two Rosbaud

"They couldn't believe an American actually spoke their language."



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brothers. Paul, who worked for the Springer publishing house during World War II, passed valuable information to British intelligence on the German atomic and rocket programs. In getting this information he was assisted by Hans, who was out of favor with the Nazis and living in a kind of exile in Strasbourg. He had access there to the university, and the work being done by the physicist Carl von Weizsäcker, . . . who was a close associate of Werner Heisenberg. . . . It is ironic that Boehm, who cooperated with the Nazis, has a street named after him in Graz as well as plaques in his honor, while there is nothing to commemorate either Rosbaud brother. . . .

ARNOLD KRAMISH
Reston, Virginia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Samuel Lipman raises many profoundly important questions in "Furtwängler and the Nazis." One very disturbing question . . . was conjured up by his description of Furtwängler shaking hands with Hitler at the conclusion of a performance of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony. One cannot help wondering what the Nazis were thinking about while sitting there and listening to this apotheosis of the idea of the brotherhood of man. . . . Once again we see the utter powerlessness of art in the face of evil . . . which is, I believe, at least one of the important points made by Mr. Lipman.

AL GUTTMANN
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

SAMUEL LIPMAN writes:

I am grateful for Rebecca Segal Hurowitz's many kind words about my article. Alas, she is not always accurate in her use of quoted material. When she writes that "Furtwängler saved 'a few Jews,'" she does not identify the source of the phrase: the words are Bruno Walter's and certainly not mine, for I wrote that

> He [Furtwängler] labored ceaselessly—the evidence on this point is overwhelming—to help Jewish musicians leave Germany, to write letters on their behalf to prospective foreign employers, and to make their lot somewhat easier when they could not escape. On this issue [Fred K.] Prieberg [the author of one book on music in the Nazi period and another on Furtwängler's relations with Hitler and his lackeys] is definitive, listing the names of some 109 individuals who were "in racial or political difficulties" and who received Furtwängler's help.

Again, Mrs. Hurowitz is not quite fair in her use of the cellist Pablo Casals's words about Furtwängler. He did indeed say "Furtwängler told me he had protected some Jews, and so on" (I am quoting from the American paperback edition of *Conversations with Casals*), which suggests some disdain for the conductor's actions—but just a few pages earlier, Casals had described how a young member of the collaborationist militia in Prades, the French town near the Spanish border where Casals spent the war years, had saved the cellist's life by protesting against the possibility of German action against him; in return, after the war, Casals, by testifying in the collaborationist's favor when he was on trial, had in fact saved *his* life. Casals then comments, "in those horrible days it was a small comfort to have been able to save one human life." Perhaps the same sympathy toward saving lives that Mrs. Hurowitz undoubtedly extends to Casals might be extended, at least partially, to Furtwängler also.

I also thank Arnold Kramish for his generous words. I am not sufficiently aware of how the excellent conductor Hans Rosbaud spent the war years—other than that he continued to conduct in Germany—to comment on his moral position. However, I do appreciate Mr. Kramish reminding me of the shame of the distinguished conductor Karl Boehm's conduct in the Nazi period. Boehm's own memoirs, *A Life Remembered* (1992), are a disgraceful whitewash of some very seamy cooperation with the Nazis.

Midrash & Deconstruction

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Hillel Halkin's "The Rabbinic Imagination" [March], comparing rabbinic Midrash to modern deconstruction, while interesting and formally correct, is fundamentally flawed in at least three important ways.

1. The rabbis never claimed that . . . Midrash was the equivalent of the literal mode of interpretation of texts known as *pshat*. In fact, the division into two realms of interpretation—the literal (*pshat*) and the exegetical (*drash* or Midrash)—as well as the overarching principle that no text may be removed entirely from its idiomatic meaning, . . . indicates a clear understanding that, unlike deconstruction and its illegitimate literary progeny, Midrash did not provide a co-equal original meaning of the text and that such a clear and unambiguous meaning . . . did exist.

2. Mr. Halkin misses a point that has been similarly misunderstood by many involved in scholarly comment on Midrash. . . . Literary analysis as a scholarly enterprise, if it is to have any validity in terms of truth or appropriate academic standards, should be focused on the search for the author's original meaning in its historical context. This is what the study of literature used to be, and what it will be again when sanity returns. In rabbinic literature the search for the plain literal meaning *(pshat)*, even when it is opposed to accepted *halakhic* practice, parallels this enterprise. For example, Solomon Ben Meir (Rashbam), Rashi's grandson, understood the creation story as describing the day beginning in the morning, yet he began his observance of the Sabbath and holidays the night before in keeping with *halakhah*. And there are many other examples of rabbinic statements . . . that preserve . . . a literal understanding of a particular biblical verse yet are at odds with rabbinic *halakhah* as derived from the same verse by midrashic techniques.

The midrashic enterprise is . . . analogous to the work of the legislator trying to extend existing legal principles and values to a new technology; of the judge applying constitutional principles to a case never before encountered; of the moralist taking ancient principles and finding in them guidance for contemporary society. Such . . . activity, common to all law-based societies, harmonizes . . . and papers over historical differences. Texts are not deconstructed but are plumbed for old values applicable to new circumstances.

This is not a scientific activity, nor should it be. It is a legal-scholarly activity, without which no society would survive with any sense of continuity for more than a few years, as the first new challenge presenting itself would prove in-

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surmountable. Judaism's principle of faith rests on the implicit claim, based on the Torah's divine origin, that the revealed word contains within it so much depth, such profound eternal values, that every new situation at every point in history can be dealt with . . . appropriately . . . on the basis of the existing text and the values contained therein.

Deconstruction is formally similar to this second type of activity but conceptually somewhere off in another universe. The rabbis kept their activity legitimate by keeping the two enterprises separate; the deconstructionists have degraded theirs by mixing the two.

3. Implicit in the second point is the third. The rabbis focused their Midrash on extending the meaning of the biblical text while remaining true to its values. Although outside influences had their effect, they were always filtered through the values of the original text. Deconstructionists, more often than not, evince no such sense of responsibility to the text. Instead, texts are read in the light of political trendiness, personal feelings, free association, etc., all of which are seen as legitimate readings deemed to be of equal value without regard to original intent or author. As a result, Midrash has much to tell us about the biblical text while deconstruction is often self-indulgent babble that tells us little or nothing about the text being analyzed.

In fact, the rabbis understood that these were precisely the parameters of their work. In the aggadah cited by Mr. Halkin, Moses' concern on visiting Rabbi Akiva's academy and failing to understand the discussion he overhears is properly to be read as fear that the rabbis had inappropriately deviated from the text. The fact that Moses' doubts are removed when he hears that a law being quoted is one originating from "Moses at Sinai" eloquently makes the point that rabbinic Midrash attempts to be a continuation of the original value system and not an artificial imposition upon it.

In its broadest formal terms Midrash resembles deconstruction. However, the rabbis never claimed that their activity replaced the search for the true, original understanding of the text; they avoided turning legalistic scholarly activity into a scientific pursuit; and they attempted to bring time-honored values into a contemporary setting. Deconstruction does precisely the reverse. The similarity of Midrash to deconstruction is therefore that of counterfeit money to legal tender. It looks the same until you take it to the bank.

[Rabbi] Barry Freundel
Kesher Israel
The Georgetown Synagogue
Washington, D.C.

Hillel Halkin writes:

Since my article expressed basic reservations about the comparison of Midrash with deconstruction, I do not think that Rabbi Barry Freundel and I are necessarily in profound disagreement. But he does oversimplify.

One way in which he does is by presenting the rabbinic distinction between a common-sense, literal reading of Scripture (*pshat*) and an exegetical reading (Midrash or *drash*) as being more hermetic than it is. To take a striking example, that of the rabbinic injunction against the eating of meat with dairy, which is based on the biblical verse, "You shall not boil a kid in its mother's milk": although the *pshat* of this verse would seem quite clearly to refer to nothing more than the *cooking* of young goats, Onkelos's late 1st-century-C.E. translation of the Bible into Aramaic, which is the nearest thing to an authoritative *pshat* reading of Scripture that early rabbinic tradition provides us with, renders the phrase as "*la teykhlun besar bahalav*," "You shall not *eat* meat with milk." *Pshat* and *drash* are not ironclad categories.

And a reason they are not, although I agree with Rabbi Freundel about the importance for literary criticism of "the search for the original meaning of the author in its historical context," is that this search is unavoidably subjective. As far-fetched as they sometimes are, the deconstructionists point out the obvious when they observe that any reading of a text is an encounter of two minds, the writer's and the reader's, and that no two such encounters will yield precisely the same results. This need not be an excuse for giving up on the project of *pshat* and turning literary criticism into pure *drash*. On the contrary: it should spur us on to the recognition that trying to establish the *pshat* of a text can be a complex and rewarding pursuit—but it should also caution us against assuming that any *pshat* is absolute. What one reader or historical period takes for *pshat* another will take for *drash*, and no amount of textual analysis can bridge such differences entirely. A book like the Bible speaks uniquely to each of us, which is why it is profitable to share our understanding of it with one another. If the ancient rabbis had not believed this, there would never have been Midrash in the first place.

Tennis, Anyone?

To the Editor of Commentary:

After reading Richard Stern's delightful essay, "Tennis, Anyone?" [April], . . . I wondered whether I was reading Commentary or a misplaced article from the *New Yorker*, *Gourmet*, or one of the many travel magazines I often read. "Tennis, Anyone?" had humor, a great feel for England and Wimbledon, an expert knowledge of tennis and the people who play and watch it. In short, a treat for anyone familiar with the game. Then I began to wonder whether I had missed something: perhaps the article had some subtle meanings, some social messages I had not grasped. . . . Were there some hidden messages concerning family values, the peace process, the Hiss case, gay rights, and other weighty subjects concealed among the tennis lobs?

I then reread the article and concluded that it was just a happy, well-written discourse by an author who loved the game of tennis, enjoyed watching the people who watched it, and believed that tradition and good manners were compatible with enjoyment. . . . Thank you for having the imagination to include it in your April issue.

Robert J. Rosenthal
Washington, D.C.

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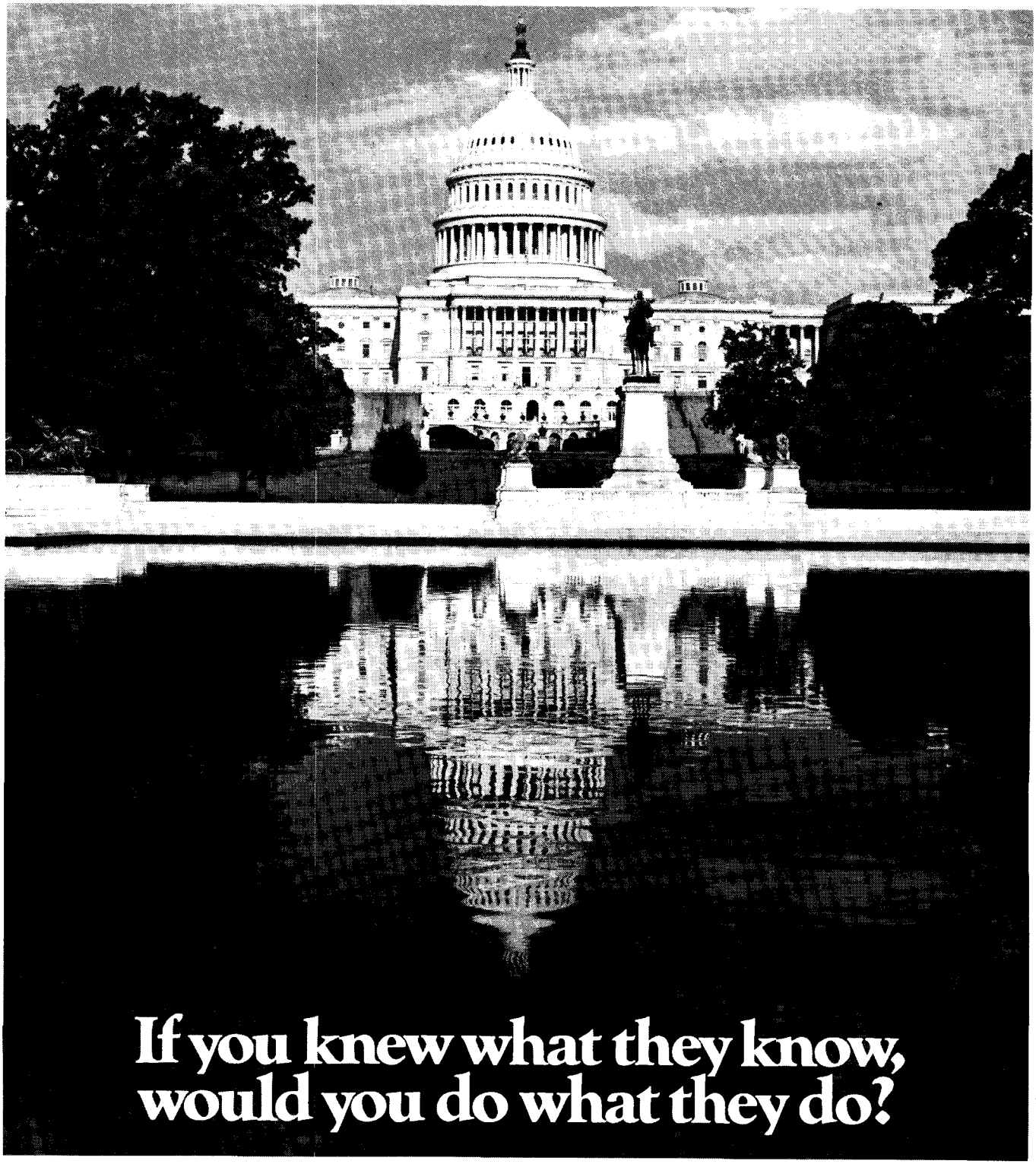

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Lament of a Clinton Supporter

Joshua Muravchik

JUST a year ago, in August 1992, I signed a statement (whose publication in the *New York Times* was paid for by the Clinton campaign) endorsing Bill Clinton for President. Although I, and all the other signers of the statement, were Democrats, most of us were notable for having taken "hard-line" positions in the controversies of the 1980's, and it was on such grounds that we made our case for Clinton.

The statement praised him for his support of "authentic democrats in the societies of the former Soviet Union" and for his "opposition to the brutal and archaic Communist dictatorship in Beijing." It praised him, too, for having "taken the lead in urging international action—including, if necessary, the use of U.S. air and naval forces— . . . to prevent Serbia's national Communist regime from doing violence to neighboring peoples." It commended him for having "resisted those at home—and in his own party—who propose reckless cuts in our national defense capabilities." And it asserted that Clinton "understood that this is a time when American leadership can give new energy and purpose to traditional alliances . . . such as . . . NATO . . . [and] can forge closer cooperation . . . with emerging powers, such as Japan."

The issues enumerated in this statement, however, did not fully explain my support for Clinton. Most of the statement's 33 signers had been consistently loyal to Democratic candidates despite being out of step with the party's recent stands on foreign policy. But I, while remaining a registered Democrat, had voted for Reagan and Bush.

As a neoconservative, my overriding interest was foreign policy, and my strongest conviction was that American policy should embody a fusion of idealism and strength. For twenty years the Democrats had been indifferent, even hostile, to the maintenance of American strength. The Republicans, on the other hand, had often been deaf to idealism. Until, that is, Ronald Reagan came along and broke that mold. Reagan, a Republican, combined strength with idealism more effectively than any President since the Democrat Harry Truman.

But then George Bush brought the Republicans back to "realism." Although he rose admirably to the challenge of Iraqi aggression, he left Saddam Hussein in power for fear of creating a regional "power vacuum." On other issues, Bush's foreign policy seemed guided by political expediency, except for his manifest convictions that America should exert less pressure against Deng Xiaoping and more pressure against Yitzhak Shamir.

Not that any of this came as a surprise; Bush was pretty much an open book before he won the presidency. Even though I knew he would pursue a foreign policy deficient in idealism, I supported him in 1988 because his opponent, Michael Dukakis, was a typical Democratic dove whose policies were bound to weaken America internationally. If forced to choose between strength and idealism in U.S. policy, I would always choose strength. A deficiency of idealism could be remedied, whereas a deficiency of strength could prove fatal.

In contrast to Dukakis, Clinton in 1992 did not seem to represent weakness. True, he advocated defense cuts beyond those already exacted by the Bush administration, to the tune of an additional $60 billion over five years. But his campaign was careful to point out that this mirrored the stance of congressional Democrats known for being "pro-defense," such as Senator Sam Nunn and Representative Les Aspin. And Clinton's bold stand on Bosnia suggested a willingness to employ force that had been emphatically absent from prevailing Democratic ideology since Vietnam.

To be sure, aware of his record as a youthful antiwar activist during Vietnam, and his roots as a campaigner for George McGovern and a protégé of Senator J. William Fulbright (who had originated the idea that America was guilty of an "arrogance of power"), I had misgivings about Clinton's rhetorical embrace of a robust foreign policy. Since, however, this was 1992 and not 1988 or 1984, I was willing to gamble. The cold war was over, and there was a greater margin for error.

JOSHUA MURAVCHIK is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute and the author of *Exporting Democracy: Fulfilling America's Destiny*. Among his many articles in COMMENTARY are "Why the Democrats Lost" (January 1985), "Why the Democrats Lost Again" (February 1989), and "Why the Democrats Finally Won" (January 1993).

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Not that weakness had now become safe; the world remained a dangerous place. But it was a lot less dangerous than it had been. If America had survived four years of Jimmy Carter's presidency during the very acme of the evil empire, it would, so I reasoned, easily survive four years of Bill Clinton if he were to disappoint me and turn out to be the second coming of Jimmy Carter.

STILL, there were reasons to think that Clinton would not disappoint, and these went beyond the encouraging foreign-policy declarations of his campaign. One was the fact that he had served as chairman of the Democratic Leadership Council (DLC), a faction within the Democratic party whose express purpose was to pull it toward the Center of the political spectrum. A second was that his campaign had taken the initiative of reaching out to me and other neoconservatives. Of course, all campaigns are eager to find support wherever they can, but we neoconservatives were particularly abhorrent to many Democratic liberals, and by courting us the Clinton campaign seemed to be making a statement.

It seemed to be making a statement as well by keeping Jesse Jackson at arm's length. For Jackson was the symbol of another cardinal characteristic of the Democratic party during the past twenty years—the uncritical embrace of black militancy. The party often acted as if it took the view that since blacks had been the victims of grievous mistreatment, it was therefore tantamount to racism to resist any black demand, to criticize any black leader, to oppose any policy of preferential treatment of blacks. This way of thinking reached an apogee at the 1984 Democratic convention when a resolution denouncing anti-Semitism was turned aside because it might be seen as a rebuke to Jesse Jackson who had referred to New York City that year as "Hymietown."

The main practical expression of this patronizing attitude was quotas and other forms of preferential treatment—not only for blacks but also for Hispanics, Native Americans, women, and homosexuals. First adopted by the Democrats in the "McGovern reforms" of 1972, these became a fixture of the party's own internal organization as well as of the public policies it advocated.

The McGovern rules were notable, among other things, for their double-talk. While they required proportional representation of the accredited groups, a footnote specified that this was not to be achieved "by the mandatory imposition of quotas." This may have been the origin of a long history of deceit associated with the issue. To this day, the perpetrators of preferential treatment deny that they are imposing "quotas" so long as they do not insist on a precise demographic mix. Yet by selecting people on the basis of their ethnicity, gender, or other group characteristic—as opposed to their individual qualifications—they are engaging in discrimination, and this, not numerical rigidity, is the crux of the matter.

The steadfast opposition to American strength in global affairs and the regimen of special preferences for particular demographic groups constituted the twin pillars of "McGovernism." Watered-down versions of two key tenets of the New Left of the 1960's—that America was the great threat to peace in the world, and that the proper goal for American race relations was not civil rights but "black power"—these ideas had been carried from the barricades to the voting booths in 1968 when student activists went "neat and clean for Gene" in working for Senator Eugene McCarthy's presidential campaign. They had then triumphed within the party in 1972 when McGovern won its presidential nomination. And they had remained party orthodoxy ever since.

My great hope now was that Bill Clinton would break the thrall in which McGovernism had held the Democratic party for twenty long years. Clinton's advocacy of an assertive foreign policy, his coolness toward Jesse Jackson, his outreach to the party's Right—not to mention his selection in Al Gore of a moderate running mate and his positions favoring welfare reform, capital punishment, and more police on the beat—all pointed to a new direction. And not just to me, as witness all the talk about Clinton as a "different Democrat" and a "new Democrat."

Nurturing my hopes even further, soon after our August statement appeared, the Clinton campaign asked some of the signers, including some of us neoconservatives, to draft a speech for the candidate about global democracy. Clinton delivered the speech in Milwaukee on October 1. It turned out to be the only one he made on foreign policy between the nominating convention and the election, giving it a certain centrality.

Then, during his television debates with President Bush, Clinton reiterated his emphasis on the spread of democracy as a principal goal of American foreign policy and, to my delight, he also spoke of the need for a stronger stand on Bosnia. On election night, after winning with 43 percent of the vote against two rivals who stood to his Right, Clinton expressed his wish for a broad government, even including Republicans.

My hopes for a new era of Democratic centrism ran high.

ALAS, these hopes almost immediately began to be deflated by the appointments Clinton made in the interregnum between the election and the inauguration.

Three things were disconcerting to me about these early appointments. The first was the choice of Warren Christopher as Secretary of State. A low-key, highly successful corporate lawyer, Christopher had only limited experience in foreign

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policy, as deputy to Secretary of State Cyrus Vance during the Carter administration and then briefly as Acting Secretary after Vance resigned.

During his tenure under Carter and in the twelve years that followed, Christopher had almost never voiced an opinion in public on any international issue. Therefore his views had largely to be inferred from the record of his patron, Vance, who had been the main architect of Carter's policy of seeking peace by palliating all adversaries—an approach branded "appeasement" by the late (Democratic) Senator Henry "Scoop" Jackson.

That Vance had changed little since his Carter days was obvious from his role in the recent Bosnia crisis. He and Britain's Lord Owen busied themselves drawing maps while campaigning against military assistance to the Bosnian victims of Serbian aggression, oblivious to the reality that no compromise could be reached unless the hand of aggression could be stayed by countervailing force.

As for Christopher himself, his sole publication was a monograph issued by his law firm titled *Diplomacy: The Neglected Imperative.* Here, in reviewing the Iran hostage crisis, Christopher declared: "I believe we should grasp, as a central lesson of the crisis, the wisdom in seeking negotiated settlements to international disputes." Insofar as it was not just vacuous, this sentiment revealed the same spirit that Scoop Jackson had characterized as appeasement. Why label Iran's unprovoked attack on American civilians as a "dispute" to be "negotiated," rather than a crime to be punished, an aggression to be repulsed, or an injury to be avenged?

Nor was the Clinton State Department leavened by the next level of appointees; on the contrary, the emptiness was reinforced. Clifton R. Wharton, Jr., an economist, former college president, and pension-fund administrator unknown in most foreign-policy circles, was named Deputy Secretary, apparently because he was black.

To the Department's third-ranking position, Under Secretary for Political Affairs, Clinton named Peter Tarnoff, another Vance protégé. Of establishmentarian demeanor and dovish opinion, Tarnoff had accused the Bush administration of having a "cold-war mentality"; opposed the war against Saddam Hussein; and called the Pentagon's plans to preserve American preeminence "chilling."

With the appointment of Christopher and this team, my fond hopes for a vigorous Clinton foreign policy, as expressed in the August ad, were all but out the window. True, the appointment of R. James Woolsey as director of Central Intelligence was heartening; he had been one of the other signers of that ad. And Les Aspin was a reasonable choice for Secretary of Defense, although I would much have preferred Congressman Dave McCurdy of Oklahoma, an early and ardent Clinton supporter who had spearheaded the recruitment of neoconservatives to the campaign.

In any case, however worthy these other men, foreign policy is formulated and executed primarily by the State Department, and I could not imagine how a policy combining strength with idealism could be led by a man like Warren Christopher, who was so manifestly indifferent to both.

THE second troubling thing about Clinton's early appointments was the rampant imposition of ethnic and gender preferences. Among others, the position of Attorney General was widely—and accurately—reported to be reserved for a woman (even after two consecutive female nominees had to be withdrawn, Clinton persevered in finding a third woman for the post).

Meanwhile, all over Washington, Democratic acitivists and officials were sharing anecdotes about aspirants who had been turned aside for being white and male, and about requests from Clinton talent-hunters for names of women or minorities for one subcabinet position or another. Even homosexual groups were carefully given their due, with the gay activist Bob Hattoy employed in the White House personnel office and the lesbian activist Roberta Achtenberg—who had opposed United Way funding of the Boy Scouts for barring homosexual scoutmasters—named Assistant Secretary of Housing.

Thus, as my hopes for a vigorous foreign policy had been dashed by the appointment of Christopher, so now my hopes that Clinton would return the Democratic party to its honorable tradition of championing equal rights were mocked by the madcap pursuit of "diversity."

The third thing that bothered me about Clinton's early appointments was in part personal. Having actively supported Clinton, and having written books about human rights and democracy as issues in foreign policy, I felt I was a plausible candidate for the position of Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy and Human Rights. But as a neoconservative, I was anathema to the party's Left, which mounted a fierce opposition to my candidacy that succeeded in killing it.

By contrast, when an equivalent position was created within the Defense Department, it was immediately filled (on an interim basis to begin with), without protest or demurral, by Morton Halperin, a veteran battler for causes that ranged from liberal to hard-Left. From the mid-1970's until the mid-1980's, for example, Halperin served as the director of the Center for National Security Studies, a spin-off of the radical Institute for Policy Studies (IPS). He also served in the 1970's as chairman of the Campaign to Stop Government Spying, an anti-intelligence coalition

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numbering among its member organizations the Black Panther party, the Committee for Justice for Huey P. Newton, the National Committee to Reopen the Rosenberg Case, Women Strike for Peace, the National Lawyers Guild, the National Emergency Civil Liberties Committee, and sundry other hard-Left groups. Clearly, it was easy to be too far to the Right for the Clinton team, but it was hard to be too far to the Left.*

One office-seeker, however, managed that difficult feat. This was Johnetta Cole, the president of Spelman College in Atlanta, who headed the Clinton transition team dealing with education, labor, and the humanities, and was considered likely to be named Secretary of Education. But her elevation was aborted when the *Forward* and then other news organizations reported her record of leadership in the blatantly pro-Soviet U.S. Peace Council and the Castroite Venceremos Brigade. When the story of Cole's political affiliations broke, Clinton spokesmen at first dismissed it as "something we're just not concerned about." But eventually they quietly distanced themselves from her, without explaining why they had entrusted an important responsibility to the political likes of such a person in the first place.

A politically-outré candidate like Johnetta Cole aside, liberal Democrats fared very well with Clinton. Donna Shalala, Robert Reich, Ron Brown, Mickey Kantor, and scores of others won the appointments they coveted. On the opposite end of the Democratic spectrum, however, I was not alone in my failed ambitions. Most of my colleagues in the Coalition for a Democratic Majority (CDM) who had worked for Clinton's election met disappointment. More surprisingly, much the same held for the leaders of the Democratic Leadership Council, even though it was regarded as Clinton's home base.

Later, a few CDM and DLC types did get appointments, but rarely what they had wished for, and not nearly enough to change the feeling I shared with many other people that the Democratic Center and the Democratic Right were the big losers in the job sweepstakes.

IN ADDITION to the problem of appointments there was the problem of the new President's wife. After the election she stopped calling herself Hillary Clinton and began to use the name Hillary Rodham Clinton. The change was innocuous, but it sounded an alarm within me. She had gone by her husband's name during the campaign. Why not stick with it? Apparently using her maiden name was important enough to her so that she and Bill were willing to endure some raised eyebrows. But this meant that she had submerged her true preferences during the campaign for the sake of appearances—the rhetorical equivalent of going "neat and clean for Gene." It made me wonder what other true preferences she might have hidden.

Daniel Wattenberg of the *American Spectator* and others had reported on Mrs. Clinton's background as a student radical in the 1960's. As spokesman for her Wellesley class at its commencement, she declared:

> Our freedom from the burden of an inauthentic reality allowed us to question basic assumptions underlying our education. . . . Our prevailing, acquisitive, and competitive corporate life, including tragically the universities, is not the way of life for us. We're searching for more immediate, ecstatic, and penetrating modes of living.

That was 1968, but the record of her chairmanship of the New World Foundation during 1987 and 1988 indicated that she might not entirely have outgrown her youthful leftism. Wattenberg revealed that the foundation had supported such hard-Left fringe organizations as the Christic Institute and CISPES (the support group for El Salvador's Communist guerrillas); and a small flap ensued during the campaign when it was reported that some New World money had also found its way indirectly to the PLO.

Friends within the Clinton camp with whom I discussed these revelations pointed out that although she had been chairman of the board, Mrs. Clinton might have been led by the foundation's staff to approve things she knew little about. This was plausible, and I was told by leaders of the DLC during the campaign that she had been an ally, not an adversary, in their efforts to keep her husband on a centrist course. She understood well, they said, that a tack to the Left would be a severe liability. Yet her change of name on the morrow of the election made me wonder whether the political centrism she had demonstrated during the campaign had also just been a temporary bow to political expediency. Perhaps something of the real Hillary Rodham Clinton was to be found in the New World Foundation?

A closer look at the record of that foundation gave more reasons for concern. Since its staff remained relatively stable while the chairmanship rotated every two years, I had imagined that the donations to the far Left were a tradition that had merely been continued during Mrs. Clinton's tenure. But it turned out that under her chairmanship, the number of leftist groups receiving funding actually increased several times over.

Thus, in addition to Christic and CISPES, the list of beneficiaries included such politically like-minded organizations as the National Lawyers Guild; Clergy and Laity Concerned; the Center

* Five months later, as Republicans in the Senate began mobilizing against Halperin's confirmation, Clinton—by then in the midst of the effort, described below, to play down his liberal image—was reported to be backing away from the nominee.

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for Constitutional Rights; the Youth Project and the Institute for Southern Studies (two IPS spin-offs); the Institute for Media Analysis (which sponsored a celebrated conference against "anti-Communism"); and lots more.

Moreover, in her foreword to the board's biennial report, Mrs. Clinton took explicit note of the increase in the number of such beneficiaries. "The foundation has turned increasingly to the support and development of progressive activist organizations," she wrote. ". . . We have made mostly general support grants, rather than project grants, so as to provide core support to organizers and advocates."

The issue of Hillary Rodham Clinton's ideological bent gained urgency from the other major change in her status that emerged after the election—her role as a full partner with her husband in making governmental decisions.

Early in the campaign, Bill Clinton had been quoted as saying of himself and Hillary: "Buy one, get one free." But this had not gone over well, and Hillary had adopted a lower profile during the heart of the campaign. Now it appeared not only that she was involved in all decisions about staffing the administration, but even that candidates for posts in the cabinet had gone to the White House once for an interview with Bill and then again for (a longer) one with Hillary. *Newsweek* quoted an unnamed White House aide: "She isn't just in the loop, she *is* the loop."

Thanks to all this, by Inauguration Day, my Election Day hopes were turning into fears.

In the next five months, things got worse.

As it happens, I was all in favor of Clinton's announced determination to reduce the deficit, and I had no quarrel with his view that this could not be done without a combination of higher taxes and spending cuts. But what did bother me—and what belied Clinton's rhetorical campaign commitment to American strength—was the difference in the way he treated domestic spending as against spending for defense. Whereas the Clinton budget proposed a mix of increases and cuts in domestic spending that resulted at best in a wash, the Pentagon was being asked to drink the bitter potion of stringency to the last drop.

Gone now was the Clinton campaign's pledge of a $60-billion cut, in line with Aspin's and Nunn's proposals; instead, Clinton proposed a cut of twice that size, $120 billion. This cut, furthermore, was calculated against a "baseline" of the last Bush-administration defense projections which themselves had called for annual *decreases*. (Clinton's domestic cuts, in contrast, were calculated against a baseline that increased every year to compensate for inflation and growth in the number of people served by each program.) On top of this, some of the funds counted within the defense budget were earmarked for converting defense industries to civilian ones, a project which would contribute nothing to military strength.

The deep cuts proposed by Clinton were driven entirely by budgetary goals, and the administration conceded that it had not yet completed its own "bottom-up" review of American defense needs and costs. What was undeniable, however, was that cuts of this magnitude would compel not only more big reductions in land and naval forces and the cancellation of weapons, but in all likelihood reductions in force readiness as well.

The practical implications of Clinton's plan became clear when Secretary Aspin suggested that the Pentagon was moving from a "two-war" to a "one-and-a-half-war" capability. This new strategy was dubbed "win-hold-win," meaning that if faced with conflicts in two theaters—say, the Persian Gulf and Korea—the United States would have only enough forces to win one at a time. We would aim merely to hang on in one theater while using most of our forces to win in the other, and then redeploy them. A former Pentagon official, Dov Zakheim, called this a strategy of "win-hope-win" because of the uncertainties of military outcomes, and the *Washington Post* quoted senior officers who were even less charitable in their alternative tags: "win-hold-oops" and "win-lose-lose."

Michael Handel of the Naval War College observed that an earlier version of "win-hold-win" was the Schlieffen Plan that drove German strategy in World War I. The idea was to defeat France quickly while "holding" Russia and then transferring forces to the Eastern front. The imperative of defeating France quickly led Germany to violate Belgium's neutrality which, fatefully for Germany, precipitated Britain's entry into the war. (The irony that Germany won on the front it was trying to hold and was stalemated on the front it was trying to win only underlines the limits of military foresight, and therefore the wisdom of erring in the direction of maintaining too large a force rather than too small.)

Finally, "win-hold-win" would mean that every time the United States deployed its forces against a Saddam Hussein, some other miscreant would be emboldened by the knowledge that we lacked the ability to stop him from any adventure he might be contemplating.

Nine days after announcing the new strategy, Aspin recanted, declaring, according to the *Washington Post*, "that the United States can and should preserve its ability to fight and win two regional wars at once, even while making big cuts in forces and personnel." But since the administration was not backing away from any of its defense-budget cuts, Aspin's recantation offered cold comfort. If there is one thing more dangerous than a one-and-a-half-war strategy, it is a two-war strategy with one-and-a-half war forces.

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Clinton's defense budget followed hard upon his order to admit homosexuals into the military and Aspin's order to allow women in combat roles. Whatever the merits of these two innovations, they were unwelcome to most men and women in service, who were already reeling from the announced cuts that jeopardized their careers and seemed to belittle the importance of their mission. Taken together, these policies were certain to undermine the morale of the military, just when the élan and competence of the all-volunteer force had shown itself, in Operation Desert Storm, to be one of our country's great assets.

Clinton's highly publicized visits to military ships and bases were evidently intended to counteract this blow to morale. But such pats on the head could scarcely erase the impression that Clinton saw the military not as intrinsically precious but as a resource to be exploited for more important purposes—a milk cow for other budgetary priorities and a laboratory for social experiments.

DURING the presidential campaign, Clinton, chastised for having evaded the draft, labored to portray himself as equal to the responsibilities of commander-in-chief. The earnest of his toughness was his advocacy of military measures to thwart Serbian aggression in Bosnia. But once in office, Clinton turned a blind eye to Bosnia, complaining that "I don't want to have to spend any more time on [Bosnia] than is absolutely necessary, because what I got elected to do was to let America look at our own problems."

When the administration addressed the issue in February, Christopher announced that America would "throw the full weight of our diplomacy" into it—apparently an application of his "neglected imperative" theory. Then in May, after the situation had grown worse, Clinton made it known that he had settled on military action—arming the Bosnians and aiming airstrikes against Serbian artillery—and that Christopher would travel to Europe to sell this to our allies. But the "neglected imperative" failed again: upon his return, Christopher announced that he could not persuade the allies.

Questions later arose about just how hard Christopher had tried to win allied backing for Clinton's military proposal. William Safire of the *New York Times* reported that the NATO commander, Manfred Wörner, had offered to help line up support but that Christopher had brushed this aside. And some British officials hinted to journalists that their government had been prepared to yield to American pressure, but, as one of these officials put it to *Time*, Christopher left "the impression that he had no views one way or other."

Thereafter, the administration addressed the problem mostly in alibis. Clinton insisted that he had not changed his mind about the desirability of military action but that he was helpless because "The United Nations controls what happens in Bosnia." Christopher moaned that Bosnia was a "problem from hell," while dismissing Margaret Thatcher's appeal for action as "emotional." Shamefully, he testified in mid-May before the House Foreign Affairs Committee that "there is considerable fault on all three sides" in Bosnia and "atrocities by all three," assertions that were at once contradicted—in a secret memo eventually leaked to the *New York Times*—by the State Department official charged with monitoring human-rights abuses in Bosnia.

In June, Clinton sent a letter to German Chancellor Helmut Kohl requesting that he raise anew the issue of military action on Bosnia at a meeting of European leaders. Kohl complied, only to have the administration announce that Clinton had not meant it. The *Washington Post* noted "the amazing incompetence of having the President say something one day to a foreign leader on a subject of great sensitivity and importance and almost immediately claim it wasn't at all what he meant."

Still, as the *Post* added, the problem went deeper than incompetence; it went to outlook or vision. Midway into Clinton's fifth month in office, the *Post* columnist David Broder reported that "the NATO allies, along with the leaders of the major trading nations and the former Soviet empire, . . . are united in their dismay at what they see happening to America's President and America's capacity to lead." And Flora Lewis wrote in the *New York Times* that "What is bothersome is the odor of weakness coming from Washington."

This odor was made even more pungent by Peter Tarnoff, the Under Secretary for Political Affairs. In a background briefing to reporters he explained that Christopher's failure to win European support for military action in Bosnia was not a setback but rather the opening of a new era of deliberately reduced American leadership. In this era, he said, "our economic interests are paramount" and America must "define the extent of its commitment [which] may on occasion fall short of what some Americans would like and others might hope for."

About Christopher's European consultations, Tarnoff observed that European leaders "were genuinely disarmed by the fact that he was there to consult. . . . He did not have a blueprint." He added: "The approach is difficult for our friends to understand. It is not different by accident, it's different by design." Difficult to understand, indeed. The outcry of alarm from foreign leaders extended even to the Foreign Minister of Sweden, not a country famous as a cheerleader for American power, who commented: "What the United States says about its own role is very im-

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portant. It is really tragic to give a signal to the world that you are not prepared to pursue your leadership."

The White House and Christopher quickly disavowed Tarnoff, but he was not punished and the disavowals rang hollow. After all, what Tarnoff said at the briefing was not much different from what Christopher himself said that same night on *Nightline*. Also defending inaction on Bosnia, he argued: "If we insisted on doing everything ourselves, we would not be a superpower." We must, he continued, "save our power for those situations which threaten our deepest national interest." Such as? "If we were really threatened by something, if our national interest were at stake—for example, if somebody was invading us—of course we'd act alone."

Christopher's failure to offer any illustration of a proper use of U.S. military power other than to defend our own shores surely heightened, rather than allayed, anxieties in friendly foreign capitals. So, too, with his implication that power is a commodity that gets used up if it is not husbanded—a remark which made the Secretary appear to be completely innocent of the dynamics of international politics.

WHILE Tarnoff and Christopher were pouring cold water on the hopes I and other neoconservative Democrats had for Clinton in foreign policy, the nomination of Lani Guinier to head the civil-rights division of the Justice Department and some speeches by Hillary Rodham Clinton were doing the same in the area of domestic affairs.

Critics dubbed Guinier the "quota queen," an unfortunate epithet because it seemed mean-spirited and because the nostrums she favored in fact went far beyond quotas. As her writings demonstrated, Guinier would not be satisfied with proportional representation of minority groups in education, jobs, and government office. For her, the holy grail was "proportional legislative power" in which "each group has a right to have its interests satisfied a fair proportion of the time." The goal was "Roughly equal outcomes, not merely an apparently fair process."

Toward this end Guinier would dismantle the American system, by court decree, and replace it with one tailored less to the representation of individuals and more to the representation of ethnic groups—a system reminiscent of the former Yugoslavia. Or, to take the example that Guinier herself offered: "What I am talking about is really no different than what the white minority is talking about in South Africa."

Nor was this all. Representation for blacks, she explained, required not merely black representatives but "authentic" black representatives who, unlike Virginia's Governor Douglas Wilder, would be "politically, psychologically, and culturally black." Guinier, in short, held views on race about as extreme as anyone this side of the apostles of violence. Her nomination as the nation's top civil-rights official reinforced the message of the "diversity" crusade—that this President was aiming for something other than a color-blind America.

As for Mrs. Clinton, she was making statements that to me—and again, not to me alone—called into question the administration's underlying intellectual seriousness and even its common sense.

Speaking to an audience in Texas, the First Lady asserted: "We are, I think, in a crisis of meaning. . . . What do our lives in today's world mean?" She continued: "We need a new politics of meaning. . . . It is not going to be easy to redefine who we are as human beings in this postmodern age." When Michael Kelly of the *New York Times* suggested a little wickedly to her during an interview that it sounded as if she was "trying to come up with a unified-field theory of life," she replied: "That's right, that's exactly right." She confessed, however, that "we have to first create a language that would better communicate what we are trying to say."

Kelly pointed out that passages of Mrs. Clinton's Texas speech were nearly the same as passages from her Wellesley commencement address, which raised anew the question of how straight, and how short, a line she had traveled from Wellesley in 1968 to the New World Foundation in 1987 to the White House in 1993. The question was underscored by her widely-publicized acknowledgment of the influence on her of the editor of the leftist Jewish magazine *Tikkun*, Michael Lerner. It was Lerner who had coined the phrase, "the politics of meaning," and who had advanced the ludicrous proposal that "Clinton require every administration program to be accompanied by an ethical impact report that would demonstrate how the program contributes to a sense of solidarity and caring among the people whose lives it touches."

As a busy New Left activist in the 60's, Lerner had been, among other things, a leader of the Seattle Liberation Front which violently closed down the University of Washington in 1970. Although he no longer professed Marxism, Lerner's current writings often amounted to much the same thing in many of the same words. Recently, for instance, he had lamented "the reorganization of the workplace in ways that increased productivity or profit by decreasing for most workers the degree to which they could use their intelligence and creativity" and "the commodification of nearly everything . . . the fostering of a marketplace mentality in human relations." Instead of attributing these well-worn formulas to the *Communist Manifesto*, where most college students first encounter them, Lerner claimed to have discovered them in his psychological "research."

Lerner was ostentatiously Jewish, which made some people think that he had outgrown his juvenile political fanaticism. But a closer look re-

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vealed that his religiosity consisted largely of reducing Judaism to a collection of leftist fads and New Age clichés. To cite only one illustration, he had amended the confessional Yom Kippur prayer (*al het*) to include the "sins" of "accepting the current distribution of wealth and power," "participating in a racist society," "not doing enough to save the environment," "not doing enough to challenge sexist institutions," and "turning our back on the oppression of gays and lesbians."

Like Mrs. Clinton, Lerner came across as someone who yearned to think deep thoughts. Their partnership brought ridicule on the administration even as Guinier inspired outrage and Tarnoff aroused alarm.

AFTER four months, the Clinton presidency found itself in free fall. *Time* ran a cover title, "The Amazing Shrinking President," and Clinton's approval ratings dropped to the lowest in the history of polling for this point in a President's term. Gallup found that only 37 percent approved Clinton's performance while 49 percent disapproved. This correlated with a change in perceptions of Clinton's ideology. A CBS/*New York Times* poll showed that while in January 39 percent had identified Clinton as a moderate and 36 percent as a liberal, by June 47 percent saw him as liberal and 31 percent as moderate, a swing of 19 percentage points. Yankelovich meanwhile reported that 41 percent found Clinton "too liberal" while only 15 percent found him "not liberal enough" and 35 percent "just about right." This, too, was a big shift since January.

In response to the sense that his presidency was dying in its cradle, Clinton stunned political observers by hiring a former Reagan strategist, David Gergen, to be his communications director and senior counselor. Then, in short order the President yanked the nomination of Guinier on the ground that her writings "lend themselves to interpretations that do not represent the views that I expressed on civil rights during my campaign"; appointed Ruth Bader Ginsburg, widely regarded as a moderate, whom he had previously passed over, to the Supreme Court; backed down in the Senate on parts of his economic plan; retreated considerably on the issue of lifting the military's ban on gays; and ordered a modest military strike against Iraq in retaliation for the plot to assassinate former President Bush. Along the way, in an interview with the columnist Ben Wattenberg, he described himself as a "moderate" rather than a "liberal." All this seemed to signal a rather sharp course correction.

But so what? Much that Clinton has done since the election gives the impression that the inner compass that was forged in the McGovern campaign, and perhaps in his marriage to Hillary, pulls him to the Left until the force of public opprobrium deflects him back toward the Center. If that is so, we may be in for three-and-a-half more years of zigs and zags.

On the other hand, it is not too late for Clinton to make something more than a tactical shift. Not everything he has done since January has been disappointing to me. I was heartened by the support he gave to Boris Yeltsin at the Vancouver summit and by his decision to launch Asia Democracy Radio, an analogue to Radio Free Europe. Perhaps he can yet rediscover the moderate voice that he found as chairman of the DLC and during much of his campaign.

Some commentators say that to do this, Clinton should focus on "New Democrat" issues like welfare and education reform. Perhaps, but those issues turn out to be slippery. Although his "New Democrat" pledge to "end welfare as we know it" played well with conservative voters, his task force on the subject revealed that the new services contemplated to replace welfare would actually cost taxpayers more. And while Clinton was once an apostle of the "standards" movement in education reform, his administration introduced an education-reform bill that called for national student tests to be graded by race.

To me, as I have already indicated, being a "New Democrat" means more: it means breaking with the twenty-year tradition of McGovernite liberalism. To do that, Clinton would have to execute an about-face on his policies toward the military. He would have to get himself a Secretary of State capable of conducting the kind of engaged policy described in the statement I signed last August. And he would have to return to the creed of equal rights and equal opportunity instead of discrimination in the name of "diversity" and "equal results."

I certainly hope that Clinton will do all these things. But this time around, after watching him in action since Election Day, I am hoping with a sinking heart.

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Yes and No to the Holocaust Museums

Edward Norden

LAST year, in a round-table discussion on the *MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour*, the subject was U.S. troops to Somalia. A black activist guest said she was in favor, emphatically—because this was a holocaust, and did not the U.S. go to war against Germany to save the Jews from the Holocaust? A question from an educated young woman. It stuck in the mind, as did the fact that none of the other guests picked up on it—Jim Lehrer, as we shall see, knows the answer, but also let it go. Sticking in the mind, her question put an extra twist on the already-too-complicated problems of history and truthfulness, the uses of memory and the mysterious ways of America, which bedeviled at least one visitor recently at the just-opened Museum of Tolerance-Beit Hashoah in Los Angeles, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in the nation's capital, and a traveling exhibit for children entitled "Daniel's Story."

The West Coast site and the one on the Mall in Washington are not exactly two of a kind. Yet both depend on the fact that although rescuing Jews had nothing to do with America's going to war against the Third Reich, American troops did eventually stumble on Buchenwald, Dachau, and Mauthausen, and gazed at what the Germans had done. The place on the Mall is repeatedly explicit about this, beginning with a quotation from Dwight Eisenhower chiseled at the entrance. Less blunt is the L.A. facility. Yet it too has, among the objects displayed, a large American flag sewn by survivors of Mauthausen and presented to their liberators. Abstractly, necessarily, the Stars and Stripes drive out the swastika, because Nazism was or is the obverse of the world view of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights, the Emancipation Proclamation. The creators of both these new museums seem therefore to have believed, or at least wished visitors to guess, that all-out war between the U.S. and Nazi Germany was inevitable.

Was it? The truth is that Hitler declared war first, and if he had not, it is conceivable that the U.S. might have stayed out of the European fighting. But this tidbit of history not surprisingly comes up in neither exhibit. Some of the jobs these buildings have undertaken to do would not have been made easier by bringing in this detail, much less dwelling or speculating on it. Nor does a visitor learn much about the history of the projects themselves. But in order to appreciate these problematical shrines or tourist attractions or schoolhouses which have now been opened, some of that history will have to be told.

UNLIKE the building on the Mall, the one in L.A. is nothing special architecturally. Eight stories of blank stone and glass, it looks solid enough to get through an earthquake, despite the Guggenheim Museum-like corkscrew ramp at its core, adjacent to which lie the exhibition spaces, a theater, a gift shop.

This minimal self-consciousness is natural. Orthodox Jews do not especially go in for appearances, and the moving spirits behind the Simon Wiesenthal Center's Museum of Tolerance-Beit Hashoah are Orthodox Jews, albeit of the "modern" kind. The museum was itself the idea of an Orthodox rabbi, Marvin Hier, and the area in which the building stands is not only fairly Jewish but rather Orthodox—the multiplying kosher butchers and yeshivas of the Pico-Robertson neighborhood are up the street, and the Menachem Begin campus of Yeshiva University of Los Angeles (YULA) is right next door.

Rabbi Hier was the founder of this West Coast branch of Yeshiva U. Soon after establishing it, he also founded, at the same address, the Simon Wiesenthal Center, named after the famed Nazi-hunter, with its own cramped Holocaust museum in a back room. This was a low-tech affair fashioned by and for Jews and holding nothing against the Gentiles back—an outsized portrait of Pius XII was given a prominent place among pictures of those who "didn't care." The message was that Jews have enemies, murderous enemies, and should look out.

When Rabbi Hier first announced his plan for a much grander museum, some assumed it would merely enlarge on this theme. That was one reason why his announcement was not greeted with universal joy. Freshly arrived in the city, he had already been perceived as stepping on toes and over turf demarcations on his way to making the Wiesenthal Center perhaps the biggest and rich-

EDWARD NORDEN, whose articles in COMMENTARY include "Counting the Jews" (October 1991) and "The Ingathering" (April 1991), is writing a book about the future of the Jews.

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est Jewish self-defense organization in the world.

One of the rabbi's tactics had been to enlist the friends, Jewish and non-Jewish, whom he made in the entertainment business. Concern was therefore expressed that his new Beit Hashoah—in Hebrew, the House of the Holocaust—would be too show-biz, and at the same time alarmist, parochial, illiberal, chintzy, hawkish, pro-Likud. To the plans for Beit Hashoah was soon added the concept of a Museum of Tolerance, but this did not stop a lawsuit being filed by the local chapter of the ACLU in 1985, charging that a matching grant of $5 million from the state of California was illegal because Hier was a clergyman and both the fantastically successful Wiesenthal Center and this museum project were really front operations of YULA.

An out-of-court deal took care of the suit before it ripened into a scandal. Fund-raising for the big new project, competing with fund-raising for the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., now described it in terms more acceptable to the liberal and secular imagination. Still, many of those who shuddered at Hier's methods and distrusted his motives and politics watched uneasily as the new building on West Pico Boulevard went up. They braced themselves for its gala opening earlier this year in the presence of the eighty-four-year-old Wiesenthal, the two Jewish female U.S. Senators from California, and Arnold "The Terminator" Schwarzenegger, son of an Austrian Nazi.

"THE trick, if you want to teach people," Schwarzenegger commented at the opening, "is you have to first grab their attention." Undeniably, the Museum of Tolerance, a.k.a. the Tolerancenter, which a visitor enters first, does this. "Faggot!" an amplified voice from somewhere whispers at him. "Redneck bastard!"

The message, the lesson, of this first section is that intolerance in America remains endemic and vivid, and "the potential for violence is within all of us." No one is let off the liberal hook. "Some of them are my patients," complains a white doctor, probably a Jew, on one of the dozens of TV monitors arrayed in the Tolerancenter. "I mean, right next door. Can you imagine?" says a black in suit and tie. Lacking the high gloss such things may possess, this rather noisy multimedia show reminds one of the up-to-date gadgetry deployed by proselytizing Orthodox Jews. Yet that does not seem to make the first leg of the exhibition any less irresistible to the museum's nonsectarian target audience.

A young, mass audience. Its consciousness, the museum assumes, was seared if not raised by the April 1992 riots in the aftermath of the verdict in the first Rodney King beating trial, an event which the politically correct in Los Angeles always refer to as "the rebellion." These riots, therefore, have been made to figure large. At the push of a button, a visitor gets the viewpoint of a Korean grocer, an Orange County housewife, a cop, a South-Central gang member who blames TV for showing where the looting was good. "Take Responsibility!" the visitor is urged. "Think for Yourself!" The undebatable message, however, is that the King beating, the verdict in the trial, and the riots that followed were all equally a result of intolerance, an intolerance spread evenly across the ethnic rainbow, a devil of intolerance which has been at odds with America's better nature ever since Plymouth Rock.

No, even before. "In 1492, my people welcomed Columbus—a big mistake," remarks a cutout of a Native American. Then, in June 1637, 500 Pequots were massacred. The Pilgrims responsible are classified among the great villains of intolerance, along with Saddam Hussein, Khomeini, the Khmer Rouge, Hitler, Lenin. As against them, there are heroes, American and foreign, to learn about and emulate: Gandhi, Churchill, FDR, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, Jr. The visitor gazes at the classic images of the dogs being sicked on the marchers at Selma and of blacks standing with Unitarians and Jews, arms linked, singing "We Shall Overcome."

In other words, there is nothing here to rile the ACLU. Nor the Armenians and Cambodians, whose treatment at the hands of the Turks and the Khmer Rouge is covered, briefly, in a display on pre- and post-Holocaust genocides. The Holocaust itself, so the lesson is taught in L.A., represents the ultimate act of intolerance to which any form of intolerance can lead. This, indeed, is the bottom line, and it brings us to part two, Beit Hashoah.

Beit Hashoah seeks to teach visitors about the Holocaust by making "witnesses" of them. To this end, each receives a "passport" in the name of a murdered, or occasionally a rescued, Jewish child, and is moved along, processed as it were, from diorama to mock-up by pre-timed, disembodied narrators. "It started with words," we are told, and here is a Weimar bookstore retailing *Mein Kampf*. A Berlin café in 1932 features George Segal-esque mannequins discussing the pros and cons of "this Hitler fellow." Then a book-burning, a rally at which orgasmic women throw the fascist salute, and the strains of the theme from *The Threepenny Opera*.

The sound level continues quite high. How could it happen? Well, a lost war, terrible inflation, unemployment. But why blame the Jews? "By blaming them, Hitler was reviving a centuries-old prejudice." And the churches? Did they not know? Of course they did, yet it was the Vatican's emissary who presented his credentials to the Nazis ahead of the rest of the diplomatic corps. In a photo of this ceremony, the origins of Beit Hashoah in the little museum next door—the one organized around the theme that Jews are beset by murderous enemies and must beware—show through.

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As they do in some of the other facts highlighted. "Virtually no one," we learn, "wanted to accept an influx of Jewish refugees—including the United States." The Jewish homeland in Palestine, meanwhile, was all but closed to Jews. Nothing if not literal, Beit Hashoah includes a holographic view of the Wannsee Conference in 1942, at which the Final Solution was formalized. "Come sit in the ruins of the Warsaw Ghetto," the visitor-witness is told. Papier-mâché ruins. "And here are the gates of Auschwitz." The gate through which one walks is strung with real barbed wire. And here are the photos, which, even if one has seen them a million times, make the skin crawl. Electronically, the witnessing visitor's "passport" is updated. Almost always, he learns, a camp such as this was the child's last stop.

It is not, however, the visitor's last stop. "Who was responsible?" one of the final exhibits asks. "Racist bigots, blind followers, world leaders who did nothing, ordinary people who remained silent." By contrast, the names of more than 8,000 Righteous of the Nations—non-Jews who risked their lives to save Jews—scroll continuously on a TV screen. "Could it happen again?" For sure: here are fresh news clips from Somalia, Bosnia, the current Germany of the skinheads.

This is a climax of sorts, and a return to the premises of the Tolerancenter. For those seeking more information, however, there are computer work stations accessing whole libraries of data, and for those looking for authentic objects, a room displaying canisters of Zyklon-B gas, or the Mauthausen flag. A Tower of Witness, embedded with 2,480 photos of Jews going about their lives in Europe before 1939, rises 96 feet high. As for the gift shop, it offers *mezuzot*, earrings, greeting cards, a wide selection of videos and books, from the Hollywood version of William Styron's *Sophie's Choice* starring Meryl Streep to the works of Primo Levi, and Museum of Tolerance sweatshirts.

"GROTESQUE" was the *New Republic*'s one-word verdict on how Rabbi Hier's brainchild has turned out. Yes, but in whose eyes? Not in Simon Wiesenthal's. Declared the survivor after his black-tie visit in the company of Schwarzenegger: "When you walk out of here, you are absolutely another person because you are thinking, 'What can be done that all this horror will not repeat?'" Nor in Schwarzenegger's warm gray-green eyes. To quote him again: "The trick, if you want to teach people, is you have to first grab their attention, then teach them, then make sure it lasts. And this museum does all three of those things." It does them, presumably, not for an audience of the literate and naturally sensitive, but for the masses who gravitate to Arnold's movies and might be nudged in the right direction by entertainment values, white lies, and those nauseating, infuriating photos.

And these masses are coming. Grotesque or not, the Museum of Tolerance-Beit Hashoah is a hit. An average of 5,000 salt-of-the-earth visitors weekly have been paying $7.50 each to get in, of whom not even half seem to be in any way Jewish. Tourists and local clubs and schools are doing the tour. So are ordinary couples and individuals. Possibly a quarter of a million souls will view the exhibits before the year is through—a remarkable number, considering that in deference to its origins the place is closed on Saturday, the best museum day of the week.

It has also become a venue for a more stylish crowd. On an evening in May, for example, more than 500 persons paid $20 each to pack the theater for a film—on, of course, Bosnia. A good-looking, hip, ultra-liberal, bareheaded crowd, hailing not from Pico-Robertson but rather from Beverly Hills and Malibu, unanimous in its sentiments, not overly knowledgeable about Balkan history, largely though by no means exclusively of Jewish extraction.

The documentary for which this not-uninfluential crowd had set aside an evening was made and presented by Arthur Kent, an ex-NBC reporter. "Powerful" is the favored adjective. And the movie did powerfully catch the Serbian Orthodox gunmen and gunwomen terrorizing the outgunned Bosnian Muslims in the pretty, heavily wooded Balkan hills. If the crowd expected to be shocked, it was not disappointed. Nor was anyone forgetting under whose auspices the evening was taking place. Said Kent when the lights went up: "What you have seen is an insult to the memory of those who died in the Holocaust." The unanimous sentiment in the room was for arming the Muslims, if not for intervening with American troops on their behalf. Rabbi Hier stood by listening.

He was also seen at the kosher buffet afterward, where a not-so-young, unmarried, self-confessed Jewish woman, upon being shown a copy of the medieval illuminated *Sarajevo Haggadah* by one of the Bosnians who had come to gather more Jewish support for his people, said that it was very nice and asked, "What's a haggadah?" The Muslim tried to enlighten her.

A FEW weeks earlier, on the other side of the continent, across the street from the Tidal Basin, the Jefferson Memorial, and the soggy cherry blossoms, the most famous survivor of Auschwitz wondered aloud why the order which could have been given to the American bombers to hit the gas chambers there was never given. Next, as millions watched on TV, Elie Wiesel turned and directly addressed Bill Clinton, the man the liberal audience in Los Angeles had helped to put in the White House. "I have been in the former Yugoslavia, Mr. President! I cannot sleep since what I have seen! As a Jew, I am saying that! We must do something to stop the bloodshed in that country!"

On the podium, the graying baby-boomer

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President, with his wife and daughter, braving gusts of stinging cold April rain, seemed to be listening closely and appeared to be moved. Not so Colin Powell, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, or Secretary of State Warren Christopher. They were down in the audience with Lech Walesa of Poland and Vaclav Havel of Czechoslovakia and the Vice Chancellor of Germany, and they had on their poker faces.

Into the neoclassical façade of the building they were all helping to dedicate, the following words of Ike's are carved:

> THE THINGS I SAW BEGGAR DESCRIPTION . . . THE VISUAL EVIDENCE AND THE VERBAL TESTIMONY OF STARVATION, CRUELTY AND BESTIALITY WERE SO OVERPOWERING . . . I MADE THE VISIT DELIBERATELY, IN ORDER TO BE IN A POSITION TO GIVE FIRSTHAND EVIDENCE OF THESE THINGS IF EVER, IN THE FUTURE, THERE DEVELOPS A TENDENCY TO CHARGE THESE ALLEGATIONS TO PROPAGANDA.

With the chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the Secretary of State were other cabinet officers, much of Congress, a District of Columbia junior-high-school choir, heavily black, which had rendered "The Star Spangled Banner," and a few hundred aging and elderly survivors, naturalized Americans like Wiesel, tough numbers risking pneumonia. They all heard many distinguished speakers leading up to the President.

Krister Stendhal, a Protestant cleric at Harvard, said in his invocation, "I pray that we in the churches will finally be rudely awakened to our complicity. . . . *Le'olam lo od*—Never again." Master of ceremonies Ted Koppel, son of German-Jewish refugees, laid it down that "Never again means never again in Jerusalem, Cambodia, Bosnia." Harvey Meyerhoff, the Republican builder and philanthropist appointed by Ronald Reagan to take the construction of this U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in hand, and let go by Clinton just days before, averred that "remembrance and education" will be the twin missions of this "American museum for the American people." Only the then-President of Israel, Chaim Herzog, a World War II vet suffering from the weather, left Bosnia unmentioned and said that "the United States of America led the free world in the struggle against Nazism . . . its major role in bringing this museum about is a natural corollary to its role in the world today."

IT HAD been a long road to this stormy day. Early in Jimmy Carter's presidency, Stuart Eizenstat and several other Jewish aides had suggested the building of a Holocaust memorial on federal land, but the idea went nowhere until 1978, when there was trouble over the sale of F-15s to Saudi Arabia. Carter explained his green light for the project thus:

> Although the Holocaust took place in Europe, the event is of fundamental significance to Americans for three reasons. First, it was American troops who liberated many of the death camps, and who helped to expose the horrible truth of what had been done there. Also, the United States became a homeland for many of those who were able to survive. Secondly, however, we must share the responsibility for not being willing to acknowledge 40 years ago that this horrible event was occurring. Finally, because we are humane people, concerned with the human rights of all peoples, we feel compelled to study the systematic destruction of the Jews so that we may seek to learn how to prevent such enormities from occurring in the future.

Carter appointed a committee, the Holocaust Council, to tell him exactly what should be done. The members took his reasoning seriously, indeed extrapolated from it. Headed by Wiesel and composed mainly of Jews, it recommended not only a "living monument" on the Mall, but a built-in "committee of conscience" to raise the alarm whenever human rights were trampled anywhere in the world.

Carter approved the first recommendation. The second he of course did not—monitoring human rights abroad is the State Department's job. So the U.S., by unanimous act of Congress, donated a parcel on the Mall, leaving it to the Holocaust Council to raise the money for the building and its contents.

West Pico Boulevard is one thing, the Mall quite another. There were some very wise heads who thought the entire congressionally-approved idea a poor one. For example, Henry Kissinger: "Building a memorial on national ground is likely to reignite anti-Semitism . . . [by raising] . . . too high a profile." Between the lines of Kissinger's objection stared the hurt faces of the Irish, Ukrainians, Cambodians, Armenians, blacks, Native Americans. Why a national memorial to the agony of just one very small and rapidly shrinking tile in the American mosaic?

The mostly tacit anxieties of the former refugee Kissinger were foreign, however, to some of his co-religionists. "Our decision to build such a museum," stated Ambassador Max Kampelman, a member of the Council, "says something about our commitment to human rights and to the kind of nation we want to be. . . . [It will] demonstrate the tolerance of [American] culture." But how would the Holocaust be presented to a tolerant America? As an event in Jewish history, something done by some Gentiles to virtually every Jew they could get hold of while other Gentiles looked away? Or, in the American tradition, as a non-sectarian experience packing universal meaning? Would the Holocaust be kidnapped? Talk of a pavilion to honor the gay victims of the Nazis (in the event, no such pavilion was built) fed suspicions that it might be.

By 1986, with little money raised and the thrust of the museum unsettled, Wiesel had quit, his place taken by Meyerhoff. The discussion and

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fighting over design and theme continued to the end among the sponsors, experts, and curators. But now things began to move and the funds to arrive in a torrent of big and small donations. One of Ronald Reagan's last acts in office was to unveil the cornerstone, and by the time the project was finished, Meyerhoff and his colleagues had raised $168 million, considerably more than originally aimed for.

And so, three Presidents later, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum was ready. As the gale whipped his mop of graying hair back and forth, Clinton told his countrymen that he hoped "every visitor to Washington comes here." He continued: "If this museum can mobilize morality, those who died will not have done so in vain . . . we must remain the adversaries of evil . . . in Bosnia, in Iran, in South Africa." Then he helped the sacked Meyerhoff and the indispensable Wiesel light an eternal flame, and the doors to a building unlike any other in the neighborhood were thrown open.

Unless they stop to read the passage by Eisenhower, the members of a tourist family who have just enjoyed the Omnifax films at the National Air and Space Museum nearby may have no idea what awaits them here. The façade of this building designed by the architect James Freed—himself a former Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany—says nothing else, and the structures he has placed on the roof, copies of the watchtowers of a prison, are barely visible from the street.

Unlike in Los Angeles, of course, Mom and Dad and the kids will need to pay nothing to enter, and will be able to do so any day of the week. Upon entering, however, all will be issued ID cards, not unlike the "passport" at Beit Hashoah. Each updatable card, as in L.A., tells the story of a victim or survivor the same age in 1939 as the visitor is now, and the same sex. As they receive their ID's, visitors are meant to be thinking about the words inscribed at the entrance, referring to a sub-camp of Buchenwald visited by Ike soon after his troops reached it in 1945.

Families with small children can go straight to "Daniel's Story" on the ground floor. An ugly industrial elevator lifts other visitors from a corner of the Hall of Witness, a sort of atrium, to the top floor, where the adult permanent exhibit begins. Here the first thing heard and seen on TV monitors are GI's in War Department footage by the director George Stevens, horrified by what they have just come upon and what the visitor-tourist himself observes next—the walking skeletons, the piles of naked corpses.

"How did it happen?" This rather ambiguously-phrased question is supposed to have been asked by liberators and survivors alike, and is the main one the museum proposes to answer. Its strategy in doing so is slightly dissimilar from that in Los Angeles. If Beit Hashoah is lowbrow, the exhibit on the Mall and the building housing it are self-consciously highbrow. If Beit Hashoah is loud and goes in for puppets and mock-ups, here the noise level is much lower and you find almost only genuine artifacts. If the history presented in Beit Hashoah is impressionistic, here it is scrupulous, at least so far as it goes, a faithful boiling-down into the audiovisual mode of the books of Raul Hilberg, Walter Laqueur, Lucy S. Dawidowicz, David Wyman, Martin Gilbert, Léon Poliakov, and other historians.

Will a visitor get something more, or something different, from this museum? Factors like intelligence, susceptibility, curiosity, attention span, and pure stomach will determine that.

It takes a visitor with lots of time and curiosity, for instance, to stop and view all 26 minutes of a specially-produced film on the history of anti-Semitism. This starts by recalling that Jesus was a rabbi and does not end before quoting Hitler: "The difference between the Church and me is that I am finishing the job." In between, the deicide story paves the way for colorful medieval illustrations of Jews with horns and Luther's anti-Semitic ravings. For anyone with patience, the connection will be drawn between the Gospels and the Final Solution. "Many groups were persecuted by the Nazis," the film concludes. "Only against the Jews was the whole machinery of state mobilized."

Or again, Jim Lehrer narrates a film condensing David Wyman's *Paper Walls* and *The Abandonment of the Jews*. From it, a visitor with another half-hour to spare will learn that the same FDR who itched to get his mighty country into the war against Hitler saw no good reason to interfere with Hitler's war against the Jews, even when American bombers were dealing with oil refineries across the road from Auschwitz. "Most Americans accepted the view that nothing could be done until victory," Lehrer drawls. Freed, the building's architect, and his parents found refuge in America before 1939, but later the State Department sat on its visas.

Our tourist family, if it has not bailed out through one of the special exits provided for when things become too much, now crosses a bridge across the atrium-like Hall of Witness. This is Freed's showpiece, meant to establish the mood, a nightmarish space contained in raw brick and nonfunctional girders, all its perspectives wrong, as in the set of an expressionist Weimar movie like *Metropolis*. It is a style that was proscribed, and already clichéd, when Freed left Germany as a child at the same time as Kissinger. Few tourists will catch the borrowing, but their ignorance may actually enhance the intended effect as they go on to the most painful part of the museum.

Again, as in L.A., the stress is on objects, as if otherwise the Final Solution would be incredible. A 40-foot casting of the Warsaw Ghetto wall. A freight car brought over from Poland. A toy

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wooden butterfly carved and painted at Theresienstadt. A casting of the gate to Auschwitz. Heaps of toothbrushes, combs, actual hair. A tower of about 1,500 portraits of the inhabitants of Ejszyszki, a *shtetl*, before the war. This museum, along with its objects, goes to more documentary trouble, and is also more horrific in what it makes available in the way of pictures, than is Beit Hashoah. German films of shootings, hangings, suicides, and "medical experiments" may be viewed by anyone caring to look over a five-foot-high barrier.

As in L.A., too, the visitor gets exhibits on resistance, rescue, "expressions of ordinary decency." The French Protestant village of Le Chambon-sur-Lignon mobilizes to save around 5,000 Jews. Anton Schmid, an Austrian sergeant in the Wehrmacht, is executed for sheltering the enemy. FDR finally okays the War Refugee Board, and, with money raised by American Jews and funneled through it, Raul Wallenberg rescues maybe 200,000 people. But despite this, and despite exhibits on Israel and the survivors who made it to the U.S., the mood is kept grim, the updated ID generally informing its bearer that his double failed to survive.

How, then, did "it" happen? The question is not so much answered as it is surrounded by evidence: the familiar pictures and sounds of Weimar collapsing, "the power of propaganda," the book-burnings, the Nuremberg laws, the Evian Conference, the odyssey of the *St. Louis* from Hamburg to Miami and back, an original model of an index-card machine sorting the particulars of every *mischling*, every poor child of intermarriage in the Reich, all the way through to the ghastly end, including "the ultimate crime," the murder of the children. How did it happen? It happened thus, and thus, and thus.

Visitors with exceptional stamina, having done the tour, can go on to interactive terminals programmed to answer almost any question of mere fact. Or they can patronize a gift shop and snack bar. Those who have had enough can go straight out past the entrance to "Daniel's Story," past the security guards, back into the Mall and the sunlight.

THIS end of the Mall breathes peace, rationality, optimism. All its democratic perspectives and vistas are just right. The only non-optimistic site hereabouts, one which preceded Freed's building and is popular with tourists, pilgrims, and vets who leave flowers, buy memorabilia, pray, and weep, is the memorial wall to the American dead in Vietnam next to the Lincoln Memorial. But even the wall is peaceful.

A visitor who has just spent the better part of a day in the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum may be temporarily disoriented by the peacefulness and beauty of the immediate surroundings, by the picnicking families, by the hot-dog vendors. Did Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln, all of whose monuments and memorials are visible as one strolls about, did they ever imagine David Duke and Louis Farrakhan, let alone Joseph Goebbels? An idle question. Better questions are, first, whether this museum and the L.A. museum have done what they were supposed to do, and, secondly and inevitably, whether they will be good for the Jews.

For all the differences between them, both museums are supposed to relate the story of the Holocaust, memorialize the people exterminated by the Germans and their helpers, and—by telling that story to the present American generation and generations to come—decrease the chance that any humans anywhere will be treated or be allowed to treat other humans like vermin again.

The question of how well they memorialize the dead is basically an aesthetic one, and can therefore be left to the taste of the individual. As for relating the story, the highbrow national museum has to be gauged more demandingly than that of Rabbi Hier. The *New Republic* termed it a "pedagogical masterpiece." Indeed, so far as it goes, it never blinks, and it hangs together unusually for what it is, the work of a committee melding the not always congruent researches of various historians. For example, it manages to avoid judging the *Judenräte*, the German-appointed Jewish ghetto councils, while taking a middle road between the assault on them by Hannah Arendt and their defense by Isaiah Trunk. Still, as it stands, the national museum does not get more than a B+ in history, for it does leave several crucial things out.

The exhibits at both museums are not cast in stone and probably will be altered over the years. Yeshayahu Weinberg, an Israeli who is one of the directors of the national museum, says it "restricts itself meticulously to . . . presenting the well-established actual course of events." Presumably this will continue to be its line. Which should not mean that someday, an exhibit could not be added in both L.A. and Washington on the Soviet innovations foreshadowing the Holocaust.

This is delicate, indeed treacherous, ground—the revisionist historians in Germany, led by Ernst Nolte, have been trying to domesticate the Holocaust by setting it in the period and the European context of the gulag and Stalin's Great Famine. Would the Germans have done what they did if they had not known what the Soviets had done before them, and gotten away with? Perhaps—after all, in *Mein Kampf* (1925), Hitler was already speaking of the need to "wipe out" the Jews. Yet there is something here to consider for anyone who truly seeks an answer to how it happened—meaning, beyond an evidentiary record of their techniques and other details, how the Germans could have believed themselves released from the fear of God and the opinion of mankind, and how the world could either have failed

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to credit what they proceeded to do while they were doing it, or failed to impede it while knowing full well that it was being done.

Of course, it is necessary to understand that Auschwitz went the gulag one better, mobilizing the genius of a nation to exterminate another. Even Nolte has had to admit that "the Final Solution is singular in a certain, not merely trivial sense." Yet, he immediately adds, and one has to agree with him, "that does not mean it cannot be compared."

That hard and necessary comparison, showing that the Holocaust did not really come out of the blue, need not be mischievous or confusing. Indeed, in a 1988 essay, Michael Berenbaum, another director of the national museum, saw this, writing, "Comparisons with other instances of subjugation or mass murder . . . do not innately obscure the uniqueness of the Holocaust; they clarify it." But evidently, in the push and tug of deciding how to tell it, certain illuminating facets of the larger story were ruled out. A national museum, even in the U.S., operates under constraints. The truth may freely be told about FDR and Foggy Bottom, but not about the Turks in 1916 or the Vatican in 1933-45—which is probably why, unlike in L.A., the visitor in Washington is presented nothing about the Armenians or Pius XII.

Perhaps in time a diplomatic way can be found to tell more of the educational truth, for its own sake if not for the sake of preventing a recurrence.

Such prevention is a job undertaken by both institutions. The place on the Mall is not so explicit about the task as the one in L.A., yet the words of Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton—not very different in the end from those of Simon Wiesenthal and Arnold Schwarzenegger—have been echoed in comments made by the individuals with the greatest influence on how the national museum has turned out. Berenbaum puts it like this: "The mission of the institution is to memorialize the past by educating a new generation partly in the hope of transforming the future by sensitizing those who will shape it."

So far, that hope must be judged forlorn. As if scripted by a cruel, didactic writer, the opening of both museums coincided with the escalation of the televised doings in Bosnia, and none of the false analogies drawn and pleas sounded in connection with the openings has been able to make a difference, not in restraining the people on the spot and not in revolutionizing the idea of the national interest as it is understood at the other, the business, end of the Mall. "When you're sitting there at the dedication of the Holocaust museum," Senator John McCain (R.-Ariz.) said, "and Elie Wiesel correctly points out that this tragedy [in Bosnia] is ensuing and we're doing nothing, that brings enormous pressure to bear." Enormous, but not irresistible. As McCain, who spent years in a North Vietnamese prison camp, added sensibly enough, "The question is what is viable."

In other words, it is still a jungle out beyond the twelve-mile limit, and woe to anyone living there who has only moral suasion to exercise in his own behalf.

Wiesel's outcry to the President was ignored by Clinton as Ronald Reagan ignored Wiesel's plea not to go to the German cemetery at Bitburg in 1985. But the urge to play the committee of conscience runs deep. A few months before the museum's opening, for example, but in its name, Harvey Meyerhoff protested to the German government over the decision to send Gypsy illegals back to Romania.

Touching a poisoned issue closer to home, the national museum also co-sponsored the first showing of a documentary movie celebrating the liberation of several Nazi concentration camps by all-black units of the U.S. Army. "In the wake of the controversial acquittal of an Afro-American youth accused of murdering a hasidic student last year in Crown Heights," the museum newsletter reported, "the film's premiere . . . offered a rare opportunity for reconciliation and communication between two of New York City's most prominent ethnic groups." Soon after this well-intentioned evening, held in the presence of Mayor David Dinkins, who gave a speech, it emerged that although the film-maker had consulted the museum's research materials, the camps in question were not liberated by black units at all.

But if the museums need to steer clear of politics, both domestic and foreign, might it nevertheless be within their power to help delay the return of domestic anti-Semitism? There can be no doubt that a particular kind of historical ignorance is a potential menace to Jewish security. In a survey published by the American Jewish Committee earlier this year, fully 28 percent of a national cross-section did not know what the Holocaust refers to. This level of ignorance may not be surprising in a country where most high-school graduates do not know the difference between the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. Nevertheless, it gives one pause. More remarkable still is a figure of around 20 percent of respondents across the board—whites and blacks, students and adults, rich and poor, men and women, educated and dropouts—who *do* know what the Holocaust refers to but believe it possible that it never happened.

In other words, the so-called "historians" spreading the news on campus and off that the Holocaust is a Zionist myth seem to be making headway. A generation whose conventional wisdom it is that the CIA killed John Kennedy may be ready to give a hearing to the idea that Auschwitz was not such a bad place as it has been made out to be. Elements of the deconstructionist and/or progressive establishment join hands on

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this with the neo-Nazi Right, such a leftist idol as Noam Chomsky having contributed a Voltaire-like introduction to one of the basic Holocaust-denying texts. Some of the professional deniers are quite smooth. All have the same agenda. Once the Holocaust is widely in doubt, unvarnished anti-Semitism will become a great deal less taboo for everybody.

Most of the deniers so far have been white. But the climate in which denial looks plausible, just another idea in the bazaar of ideas, is promoted by black intellectuals whose color already lets them flout the taboo without undue penalty. A federal jury has effectively decided that one such professor has a First Amendment right to keep his job as a department head at the City College of New York while making speeches about a Jewish conspiracy to enslave and demean his people. In these ways, and dispensing with the "anti-Zionist" mask, anti-Semitism is reintroduced into polite society and the work of the deniers made a little easier.

The mouths of such people will not be stopped by the new museums. But if Schwarzenegger's endorsement and Clinton's recommendation count for anything, several million Americans will visit these places before the decade, the century, and the millennium are out. What they pick up and retain, no matter how little, might render the deniers' work harder. And though it would be naive to trust in the prophylactic magic of a single educational outing, it is at least conceivable that a few black youngsters bound for college and the middle class might emerge less susceptible to the anti-Semites, especially if it were made clear, as it is not made clear now, that their grandfathers did not go to war in a Jim Crow army to save the Jews.

And what of Jewish youngsters?

GLORIOUS is the word for San Diego's Balboa Park with its bougainvillea, its fountains, its cultural landmarks in the Spanish-mission style, and its comparatively few homeless, both white and black, pushing shopping carts. It is in one of the city museums here that "Daniel's Story" has been on view this summer. A traveling version of this exhibit for children which is permanent in Washington, it has been to New Orleans and Indianapolis, and will be moving on to Seattle.

One of the first groups of children to see it in San Diego was from Beth Israel, a local Reform day school. American Jews do not have many children these days. Of the few they have, few go to Jewish day schools. Those from Beth Israel all presumably know what a haggadah is, and are, through no fault of their own, nice, sweet kids, as innocent as vanilla, indistinguishable from non-Jewish California Anglo grade-schoolers of upper-middle-class provenance. Nor are all these little blonds and blondes the offspring of intermarriage.

The Beth Israel teachers, all women, plus the moms nervously accompanying the group, did not have to call it to order before the tour started—the children were already hushed. "We want you to see what happened in Germany in the 1930's and relate it to some of what is happening in this country today," said the guide. What happened is told in the story of Daniel, a composite German Jewish boy approximately the age of Kissinger, Freed, or Mike Nichols at the time.

"My mother was really beautiful, and she made the best chocolate cake in the world!" says Daniel's recorded, unaccented voice. His sister Erika was also beautiful. "The Nazis hated lots of people. But they hated Jews most of all. Why? Why?" As in Beit Hashoah, the narrative voice moves visitors along from mock-up to photomontage to mock-up. The ambient noise is kept lower than in L.A., lower even than on the Mall—only a soft Yiddish dirge and a sobbing cello give counterpoint to the final part of Daniel's tale—and as a brochure for parents says, "There are no photos of corpses, ovens, or use of overtly descriptive texts."

The Beth Israel kids appeared sufficiently disturbed nevertheless. "We will now see the trains which took Jews to Auschwitz," says Daniel's always-innocent voice. The guide, a grandmotherly American Jewish lady, wanted to get over the word "gassed" quickly, but instead stumbled on it. "We learned that Mom and Erika were killed the day we arrived," Daniel recounts to his New World age-mates. He and his father were taken from Auschwitz to Buchenwald, then liberated by the Americans. What happened to them after that is not gone into.

The message, in Daniel's words, is that "over one million children were killed by the Nazis. . . . We must remember so that people will never hurt children like this again." The guide: "Thank you for being so good. I hope you learned a lot about the Holocaust and that you make sure it never happens again to Jews or anyone else."

THIS, however, is not the end. A cheerier, higher-decibel "debriefing room" gives the children "a chance," according to the parents' brochure, "to explore their feelings." It reminded a visitor of Rabbi Hier's Tolerancenter. Again, the pantheon of liberal heroes and heroines—the late Cesar Chavez, Rosa Parks, Anne Frank. Again, TV monitors flashing the news of contemporary trouble, the fruit of intolerance—Bosnia, the L.A. riots.

Some of the Beth Israel children perked up at the sight of the interactive gadgets, and surfed from one to the next. Others remained stunned, unable to play or talk, as if grasping that what they had just seen was not of a piece with the make-believe violence they are used to on television. Some wrote down their reactions, as they were encouraged to do, and pinned them up on a board beside those of earlier visitors. For ex-

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ample, a certain Rachel, not getting it, had written, "Jews should kill Nazis."

And half-a-dozen gathered around David Faber. He waited for them at his own homemade display, a trim man in short sleeves, the numerals on his forearm noticeable to an adult and perhaps to a child. "Katowice: My Hometown" was the hand-lettered caption of one badly faded photo. "I don't want you children to get nightmares," Faber said. "But you're here and you might as well learn." And he proceeded to tell, among other things, of how he saw his brother tortured to death by the Gestapo. A worried teacher hinted that he should wrap it up. Which, his voice breaking, he did, saying to his listeners, "This is the best country in the world to live in. You should only appreciate it. And remember, don't let it happen again. Love everybody."

Such is the message from beginning to end, and just to make sure it is absorbed, every child gets a card in plastic to wear around his neck the rest of the day, saying, "DANIEL'S STORY REMINDS ME TO TREAT ALL HUMAN BEINGS WITH RESPECT AND KINDNESS AND TO TEACH OTHERS TO DO THE SAME."

As her nine-year-old got his card, one of the moms, the color back in her face, pronounced herself well satisfied with the exhibit. Was the subject matter, she was asked, new to him? Yes. And in fact, is not anti-Semitism, first-hand anti-Semitism, quite unknown to kids like these? Indeed it is, she admitted, but then remembered that her fourteen-year-old, enrolled in public school, had recently been the target of words from a skinhead in the cafeteria. And? And her son's friend, the child of Israeli émigrés, had socked the offender. The incident had left a bad taste with her older boy, who had begged off coming today.

Meanwhile, the next batch of children entering the show, Hispanics and Asians from a public school, wanted their plastic tolerance cards too, but were informed they could have them only at the end.

More even than on leaving the museums in L.A. and Washington, an adult Jew exits "Daniel's Story" in turmoil, brooding on the psychohistory of American Jewry.

That history may never be written. If it ever is, however, it might dredge the collective subconscious for an explanation of why, in an era when American Jews were vanishing into the melting pot as never before, so many leveraged such clout and raised such impressive monies to put up the L.A. museum and especially the one on the Mall with its peripatetic children's exhibit.

Among the barely conscious motives discoverable may be guilt and anxiety: long-lasting, second-hand guilt over a previous generation's failure to do everything possible for its brethren while the extermination which later become known as the Holocaust was known to be going on. Such guilt half a century later may well be misplaced, quite unreasonable. Yet when has reason or time ever stopped guilt from eating away, demanding gestures of expiation not merely from those who might have failed, but from their children and grandchildren?

Our psychohistorian will probably conclude that one of the reasons why, immediately after the extermination, almost all American Jews shelved their doubts about a Jewish state also stemmed from the expiative imperative. "The one suitable monument to the memory of European Jewry," declared an editorial in the Israeli paper *Davar* in 1951, "is the state of Israel." There were probably few American Jews, in or out of the suddenly vestigial Zionist movement in this country, who for the next two or three decades quarreled with that sentiment in their innermost hearts. And so, when the Israelis were perceived to have their backs to the wall, in 1967 and 1973, a lot of American Jews were quite ready to do for them what they had not been ready, or had been unable, to do a generation before for the millions of people to whose memory Israel was the living, best, and only true monument.

Times change, the psyche turns. If Israel's back were again to the wall, most American Jews would surely rally to it, no matter whether Labor or Likud was in charge. But in the meantime, for a large and influential minority, Israel has become something of an embarrassment, a mundane drag, or a challenge to be overcome. The idea of Zion's centrality or preeminence in any or all things is questioned, especially as the news from Israel has become chronically disagreeable, particularly but not exclusively for liberals. There is a new breed of American Diaspora-affirmers, who say that Zion is not or should not be the only center of the Jewish universe. Much of what Israel can do, they contend, the red-hot heart of the Diaspora can do as well, if not better.

This now includes memorializing the six million and teaching the alleged lessons of the Holocaust. No longer will Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, the official Israeli museum of the Shoah, have a monopoly. The inauguration of the building on the Mall thus amounts to more than an offering to those murdered and to the diminishing band of survivors who have made the U.S. their precious home. It is also a declaration of independence.

A tacit declaration, but one not absent from the thoughts of some of those involved in making the place a reality. For Berenbaum, the "nativization" of the Holocaust evinced by a national museum shows that American Jews, unlike in the past, are today "proud and self-affirming."

How, exactly, do they affirm themselves? The planning and construction of the museum, Berenbaum writes, accompanied "the events of the 1980's [which] will slowly bring to an end the Israeli-centered period for American Jews." Those events, "for my generation," were "the debacle in

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Lebanon, followed by the Pollard affair and the Palestinian uprisings." His generation's "tale," Berenbaum therefore concludes, "is more anguished, less innocent" than that of his parents' generation, "for now the Jewish people are divided, uncertain about the direction of their future."

That is to say, roughly since Menachem Begin rose to its premiership, Israel has failed Berenbaum's generation of American Jews as moral exemplar. According to his reading of Begin's world view, a view which continues to run strong in Israel whether the Right is in or out, "Jews are a people that dwells alone. . . . Jews must determine their own morality." This view is also supposed to lurk just below the surface at Yad Vashem, an institution which Berenbaum otherwise holds in great respect. It is not his world view, however, nor the American one. "If Israelis turn to the Holocaust as proof that the whole world is against them, American Jews reinforce their commitment to pluralism by recalling the atrocities that sprang from intolerance."

Thus, by its location, by its grim magnificence, by the fact that American Jews conceived, built, and run it, the place on the Mall implies not only that these Jews have come of age, but that they are capable of instructing others in morality—yes, of providing a light unto the nation. As Rabbi Irving Greenberg, a mover behind the Washington project, says frankly: "Jews have always helped transform the world by telling their historical experience. Now we're doing that with the Holocaust."

"PROUD and self-affirming," Berenbaum calls American Jews. Some undeniably are; yet for a truthful generalization, this will not do. The Jews of America in this *fin de siècle*—many, many individuals famous and obscure, and most of the communities to which for the most part they only tenuously belong—are not in good health. Most local federations, most day schools like Beth Israel, most temples and synagogues, are having a rough time of it. Not due to intolerance, of course, but rather to the steady warmth and general openness of this society.

The gut anxiety of, say, an American Jewish veteran of World War II and his wife has little to do with David Duke or Louis Farrakhan, and is summed up in two questions: "Will we ever have grandchildren? Will they be Jewish?" The outstanding symptom, and one which Gentile friends have been aware of for some years, is that most Jewish women and men do not trouble to go together. Not to mention the fact that even when they do, they excel, in Milton Himmelfarb's immortal phrase of 30 years ago, as contraceptive virtuosos. The upshot is that, as in Berlin and Vienna when Hitler was still working the beer halls, the natural Jewish death rate in America today runs ahead of the Jewish birthrate.

The late Rabbi Meir Kahane used to call this a self-inflicted demographic holocaust. Without going half that far, we ought to be able to see that there is something odd about a tribe which successfully moves heaven and earth to have everyone commemorate the extermination of a third of its members, while failing in comfortable, safe, prosperous circumstances to reproduce itself. Is there, perhaps, a connection?

If the American Diaspora is to affirm itself and its independent future convincingly, it will have to do more than build mausoleums. A degree of separation, a bit of praxis, a measure of knowledge of the tradition and of Hebrew—only these can save the community from dwindling to the status of a kind of suburban Amish a hundred years hence, when most New World synagogues and temples will have been converted to mosques.

The museums, it is true, could play a small and useful role in preventing or delaying that. "You have to bring a person to his Jewish feelings through what he cares about," Rabbi Hier once told his detractors. "The Holocaust is a tragedy most Jews can relate to, while keeping kosher or observing [the Sabbath] is alien."

His settlement with the ACLU notwithstanding, then, a second audience is being targeted by Rabbi Hier's museum: namely, the growing mass of liberal-minded Americans of Jewish extraction who know what the Holocaust refers to and inchoately care, while possessing not the faintest idea of what their own tradition consists of. If some hope remains of bringing them to Judaism, of winning them over to the living, shrinking community, should any means be considered beyond the pale? A visit to one of the Holocaust museums, so the reasoning goes, or an evening of discussion under its auspices, could lead to something more.

It would take a very stern moralist, or someone ignorant of the trend lines, to begrudge the rabbi or anyone else this sub-agenda. Perhaps a handful of lapsed Jews will be moved as he would like them to be after visiting Beit Hashoah, and another handful similarly moved by a pilgrimage to the Mall.

YET most of those going to "Daniel's Story" and to these museums will be non-Jews. Which leaves the question to be asked, how long will they appreciate being taught that the bystander shares the guilt of the perpetrator? The ways of America are mysterious and wonderful, perhaps uniquely benign, yet one need not trust in them blindly. Did the U.S. stand by in Bosnia? It did, and it probably will not and perhaps should not intervene in future such horrors. It might be better for American Jews, practicing and nonpracticing, if these museums, which are perceived as operating in the collective Jewish name, simply let the exhibits speak for themselves. Kissinger's misgivings otherwise may yet be borne out.

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What the Sex Educators Teach

Dana Mack

When I was in elementary school, a quarter of a century ago, sex education was a matter of one or two delicate films on the physical signs of "growing up." At the age of ten or eleven, girls and boys were herded into separate rooms—usually in the company of a parent. There, in industrial-gray pictures and solemn monotones, they were introduced to the world of gametes, ovaries, and menstruation. Not exactly titillating material, this reproductive information. But those were the days when teenage boys and girls still glanced shyly at each other across dance floors—before carnal knowledge had become a *cause célèbre* of education.

Today, as everyone knows, sex education is a different story altogether. In a growing number of schools, children are no longer allowed to approach puberty wondering over the mysteries of love. The pleasures of sex are bared for them, and all the latest sexual paraphernalia explored. These are the days when kids pass condoms, "dental dams" (a kind of condom for oral sex), and "finger cots" (condoms that fit over the finger for heavy petting) around the classroom—the days of "comprehensive sexuality education," where all erotic possibilities are unveiled.

It was in the early 70's that the schools first determined to get involved in teaching children about sex. For many educators who came fresh from the university, the 60's doctrines of sexual "liberation" were calls to action. They assumed the task of disseminating these doctrines to a high-school youth still largely under the sway of parental influences they considered all too retrograde and all too chaste.

So successfully was this task performed that by the end of the 70's a government-sponsored national evaluation of the goals of sex-education programs in American high schools glowingly revealed that a catechism of liberation had already entrenched itself. According to this study, commissioned by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare during the Carter administration, the most "exemplary" sex-education programs were on the way to fostering significant "changes in sexual attitudes and behaviors" by promoting "a reduction of sexual guilt" and "an acceptance of alternative life-styles."

It was, of course, noted that the anti-traditional "values" conveyed in sex-education classes were "not supported by all members of society"—that, indeed, they were "in conflict with the belief held by some [*sic*] people that sex should be enjoyed only within the context of marriage." But both educators and government officials either ignored such people or dismissed them out of hand.[1]

In the years since this first comprehensive evaluation appeared, the disparity between the sexual code propounded at school and that generally promoted at home has only grown greater. Educators and liberal policy-makers, probably sensing the possibility of an AIDS-inspired resurgence of sexual austerity, have extended their imperial designs from the postpubescent to the prepubescent population. In many school districts, discussions of human sexuality have now entered the early elementary grades; and these discussions are broaching topics—from "self-pleasuring" to pedophilia—which even the most daring parents would be hard put to discuss comfortably with their young children.

Thus, *The National Guidelines For Comprehensive Sexuality Education*, published in 1991 by the Sex Information and Education Council of the U.S. (SIECUS), advises that children as young as five be told that "it feels good to touch parts of the body," that "some men and women are homosexual, which means that they will be attracted to . . . someone of the same gender," and that "adults kiss, hug, touch, and engage in other sexual behavior with one another to show caring and to share sexual pleasure."

Indeed, in those 70 or so school districts which have implemented the *Learning About Family Life* curriculum designed by Barbara Sprung and published by Rutgers University Press, there are no more secrets of connubial love, even for kin-

Dana Mack is an affiliate scholar at the Institute for American Values in New York. She is writing a book about the cultural environment of childhood.

[1] For a picture of the contempt with which educators and health professionals treated parental consternation with the new sexual mores being taught in schools, see Mary Breasted's *Oh! Sex Education*, a 1970 study of one California community.

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dergartners. They know exactly what their parents are doing at night in bed, and what fun they are having doing it. The curriculum explains sexual relations to five-year-olds in the following way: ". . . The man puts his penis in the woman's vagina and that feels really good for both of them. . . ."

EVEN if they have not been thus instructed in kindergarten, children are likely to learn in the next few years about other varieties of sexual pleasure and sensual adventure. By fourth or fifth grade they know enough about conception and sexual disease to unroll condoms on bananas, and to discuss the merits of mutual masturbation as an alternative to "higher-risk" involvement. By seventh grade they are reviewing the pleasures and perils of oral and anal sex, using the street names for these acts (so as—in the words of one AIDS educator—to "get beyond the euphemism of sexual language"), and role-playing "limit-setting" situations in which such hygiene-conscious responses as "No glove, no love!" will become dating reflexes. And in high school—between trips to the nurse's office for condoms—they consider the manifold options of sexual pluralism: bisexuality, transvestitism, sadomasochism, even bestiality.[2]

It seems that no age is too young, no act too depraved to be excluded from the zealous reach of the "sexuality-education" experts. To these educators, the sooner and the more completely kids are divested of innocence in sexual matters, the less vulnerable they will be to repression, victimization, and disease. Thus, if the trend-setters of SIECUS have their way (and, increasingly, they are getting it), kindergartners across the country will become comfortable with their genitals by shouting "penis" and "vulva" in the classroom. And if Planned Parenthood has its way, our high-school students will, as a matter of course, debate the ecstasies versus the risks of brachiopractic penetration (better known as "fisting"—i.e., the practice among homosexuals of inserting an entire fist into the partner's anus).[3]

It should be mentioned here that love and romance play no part in the brave new world of sexual instruction. When children become amorous, the sex-education experts contend, their rational judgment becomes impeded and contraception and disease-prevention are inhibited. Only by "breaking through fantasy and emotional barriers" and by indoctrinating students in a series of "rational . . . behavior sequences" involving "negotiating skills" and "explicit scripts," these experts say, can we bring our children into adulthood alive, sexually uninhibited, healthy, and childless.[4]

Most evaluations, even the friendliest, of contemporary sex-education programs—whether of classroom health instruction, of condom-availability programs, or of school-based contraceptive clinics—reveal the startling ineffectuality of this cold and licentious approach to human sexuality. Yet, though evidence mounts to show that sex education is failing miserably in its self-proclaimed efforts to stem early childbearing and sexual disease, educators refuse to reconsider the wisdom of their approach.

To be sure, statistics on teenage pregnancy and venereal disease suggest that children in white middle-class areas are better able than their contemporaries in the urban ghettos to weather the implicit attacks on morality and family life waged by state-of-the-art sex-education programs. But my own research also suggests that our more socioeconomically fortunate children are by no means entirely immune.

THIS research was conducted last winter in Falmouth, Massachusetts, a small town nestled on the southwestern tip of Cape Cod. Falmouth is predominantly an adult community. It features pristine white colonial guest houses, up-scale boutiques, summer residences, a significant population of retirees, and a world-class institute of marine science. It does not feature a large number of children. Out of a total population of 27,000, Falmouth's public-school enrollment comes to fewer than 5,000.

One would think, considering its demographic makeup, that education in Falmouth would reflect the values of a staid and rather sleepy community. No such thing. Falmouth is near the cutting edge of sex education, boasting not only a

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[2] This brief description of the comprehensive K-12 curriculum is based on a perusal of sex-education texts, a sex-education seminar in January 1992 sponsored by the New York Association of Independent Schools, classroom visits, and interviews with educators and parents in the New York and New England area. The sex-education texts consulted were: Gary F. Kelly, *Learning About Sex: The Contemporary Guide for Young Adults* (Barron's Educational Series); Ruth Bell *et al.*, *Changing Bodies, Changing Lives* (Vintage Books); and Peggy Brick, *Teaching Safer Sex* (Center for Family Life Education, Planned Parenthood of Bergen County).

[3] See Planned Parenthood's *Teaching Safer Sex*, in which Peggy Brick matter-of-factly lists brachiopractic intercourse among 30 sexual acts evaluated for HIV-infection risk. The high-school "safer-sex" exercises advocated in this book include a "Safer Sex Rock and Roll Dance Party and Trivia Quiz," in which students are asked to wear a name tag depicting a step in condom use, and to name two rock songs in which condoms are mentioned; "A Workshop for High Risk Youth," which begins with students shouting pornographic names for the sexual organs (Brick's suggestions: "cock, schlong, dong, wiener, tool, pecker. . . ."); and a game of "To Tell the Truth," in which four quite implausible HIV-infection scripts are enacted. These describe gays and intravenous drug users who are *not* infected (because they are monogamous and not in the habit of sharing needles), and a single heterosexual non-drug user who, as luck would have it, is infected.

[4] William A. Fisher and Deborah M. Roffman, "Adolescence: A Risky Time," in *Independent School: Sexuality Education in the Age of AIDS*, Spring 1992.

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sex-education curriculum well in the spirit of the SIECUS guidelines, but the most radical condom-availability program in the nation. It is the first (and up to now the only) program to encompass junior high as well as high school, the first and only to offer condoms to children as young as twelve without parental permission.

Two mandatory eighth- and ninth-grade sex-education classes in Falmouth have been in existence since the AIDS scare hit the media with force a decade ago. Like most such courses today, these are ostensibly directed toward abating "high-risk behavior" among teenagers. According to the school Health Coordinator, Helen Ladd, they stress "sexual decision-making skills" and "values clarification" rather than morality. That is, they disdain traditional rules of sexual conduct as quaint and judgmental, preferring to offer children "information" and the "choice" of being sexually active or not.

Sex-education instructors, however, make the "choice" of sexual activity look far more acceptable than that of celibacy. While students are told, in explicit detail and over a period of many weeks, how to stimulate their partner's erogenous zones, how to initiate casual sex, and how to keep it safe from pregnancy and disease, only 45 minutes each semester are devoted to sexual abstinence. The full range of intimate relationships is probed in the classroom, but embarrassment in sexual matters is hardly tolerated. Conception and childbearing are discussed, but marriage, says Ladd, is never mentioned as a prerequisite to parenthood. The gamut of sexual orientations (including bisexuality and transvestism) is introduced, without prejudice as to whether some might be more wholesome than others. As for family life, it is touched upon only in discussions of child/parent conflict, battering, and incest.

It is not surprising that a sex-education course which disdains discussion of monogamy and normalizes teenage experimentation would feature warnings about the imminent risk of disease. For several years now, Falmouth health educators have demonstrated the use of condoms in the classroom. But simply unveiling prophylactics in the classroom is no longer enough. Since January 1992, the Falmouth School Committee, acting on a State Department of Education directive, has crowned the sex-education courses with its radical "condom-availability" program.

Condom availability was not foisted on Falmouth's citizens with ease. Though the measure sailed through the School Committee by a 7-2 vote, public endorsement was hardly immediate. In fact, when the public got wind of it, there was some real alarm. Angry parents of junior-high and high-school students protested, and a petition opposing the measure garnered 3,200 signatures in the community. It was clear that a public referendum would have to be called. But it was just as clear that Falmouth citizens were too deeply divided on the measure to make the vote a decisive one. For among parents, too, there was an active base of support for condom availability.

Not, however, because parents in Falmouth have much patience with casual teenage sex. On the contrary, to talk to parents who support the condom-availability program is to uncover their conviction that children today are "too fast." But at the same time the parents harbor some formidable concerns about the health risks of sexual activity. Says one Falmouth mother, dramatically, "It used to be the very worst that happened [to children] is they got pregnant and ruined three lives. Now they end lives."

Concerned Citizens, a core group of parents and educators who launched a campaign against the measure, tried to bring up some of the deeper issues of sexual morality involved in school condom distribution. But pro-condom parents refused to listen. They turned a deaf ear to the argument that the program seemed to violate the right of parents to impose standards of conduct on wayward children. Nor did it move them that the schools were delivering an implicit message to kids that casual, premarital sex was OK, if only they would use condoms. In an age of sexual permissiveness and AIDS, pro-condom parents contended, the niceties of sexual morality were secondary to saving lives. And only condoms could save lives.

Why was the public so convinced that children were at risk of AIDS? The principal reason seems to be that AIDS has received a lot of attention in Falmouth. Falmouth is an HIV-conscious town, with an impressive number of AIDS activists. Two years before the condom-availability program was instituted, a task force of educators and health professionals embarked on a campaign to publicize the disease, distributing leaflets and teaching hygienic precautions to town employees and community groups.

In Falmouth, as elsewhere, the major goal of AIDS activists has been to promote public sympathy for the disease and to remove any social stigma from those afflicted by it. In these interests, the task force took a willfully vague approach to educating the public about the facts of HIV transmission—insisting in its publications, for example, that there were no specifically high-risk groups and that "everyone" should be concerned about possible infection.

Yet nothing could be farther from the truth. In the more than thirteen years since AIDS was discovered, Falmouth has remained relatively untouched by the disease. According to the Massachusetts Department of Health, the cumulative number of full-blown

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AIDS cases reported in Falmouth is twelve—less than one a year, to date. And much evidence exists to suggest that HIV will not much trouble the town in the future. Studies such as the National Institute of Research's *Report on AIDS* tell us that the disease remains confined to very specific high-risk groups (homosexuals and intravenous drug users) and to relatively restricted geographic areas. Cape Cod does not seem to be one of these areas. Nor are teenagers in general at risk. Nationally, teenagers make up less than 1 percent of all AIDS cases, and even that number has been declining.[5]

Still, considering that they were subjected to a two-year propaganda campaign, it is not difficult to understand why many Falmouth citizens—and many parents among them—came to regard condom availability in the schools as necessary public intervention. Nor, under these circumstances, is it surprising that Falmouth parents have paid little attention to the active competition the school is waging for the souls of their children, or of the battle it has pitched between the conflicting ideals of teenage sexual continence and libertinism, between a family-centered and a self-centered world view.

Nor, finally, is it a wonder that those who do challenge the sex-education program for its ideological slant find themselves labeled as troublemakers and religious fanatics. "We are pretty much treated like outcasts," laments James Remillard, the president of Concerned Citizens. Remillard blames this ill will more on ignorance than on spite or on fundamental differences in sexual morality. Parents, he says, respect the schools as public institutions, and want to trust educators. They are generally unaware of the more controversial elements of the sex-education program, because the school makes it a point to misrepresent the program as largely informational.

But if Remillard exonerates parents to some extent, he is becoming ever more suspicious that educators will stop at nothing to undermine parental authority in the interests of pushing their notions of teenage sexual liberation.

He is probably well justified in this suspicion. The Falmouth High health administration *is* preoccupied with getting children out from under the parental wing—so preoccupied, in fact, that it is now trying to influence them subliminally, by practicing hypnotism. In a mandatory "Stress Reduction" class, ninth-graders this year have engaged in hypnotic exercises exhorting them to leave the stress-reduction classroom ready to make "adult decisions."

One wonders just what sort of "adult" decisions a child of fourteen is faced with; presumably they are the ones with which he is confronted in his sex-education classes, where decision-making "skills" are worked on at a more conscious level.

But here we come to a deep paradox. More often than not, these "skills" have to do with techniques not of sexual activity but of *refusal*—"defensive strategies" that must be learned if children are to protect themselves against an environment in which (in part as a result of the ideology of sexual liberation) increasing numbers of impulse-ridden adults, having been freed of their repressions, are only too ready to exploit and molest helpless and dependent children.

BUT it is not only predatory adults against whom the children are taught to defend themselves. Thanks to the influence of feminism, whose dogmas about rape and sexual harassment conflict at many points with the ideology of sexual liberation, the educators—having first encouraged casual sex among teenagers—now find themselves teaching "defensive strategies" against it.

The results can be almost comical, as I discovered in visiting a Health Issues class on the subject of "date rape." The discussion was led by two affable-looking teachers, one a heavyset male, the other an athletic-looking female. The assignment: having seen a film involving a dramatization of date rape, students were asked to identify "attitudes" which might lessen their own risk of being caught in such a situation.

The class, about evenly mixed between boys and girls, was quiet. The teachers urged them on. "Come on," exhorted the male teacher. "What can we do to prevent what we saw in the film—to prevent date rape?"

A wiry brunette raised her hand tentatively. "Never be alone with a boy," she attempted. The teachers were not pleased, but passed over the remark with the comment that there might be ways in which one could be alone with a boy and still avoid date rape.

A second girl, red-haired and freckle-faced, and looking young for her fourteen years, raised her hand. "Bring a gun on dates," she ventured, her voice quietly resolute. Though the teachers choked back laughter, no student so much as cracked a smile.

The teachers tried again. Haven't we talked about mutual respect? About open communication? About assertiveness? About equality? About the problem of "gender roles" which encourage men to be sexual aggressors, and women to be passive? The students obediently wrote these things down in their notebooks, and began to come around to answers more acceptable to their instructors.

In addition, then, to being initiated into a utopian world of sexual epicureanism, where uninhibited men and women act in perfect concert, and the "decision to have sex" is as consensual as

[5] See Michael Fumento, "Teenaids," *New Republic*, August 10, 1992.

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it is casual, children are getting a distinctly different message: that men are sex-hungry brutes, and that women are sitting ducks for sexual coercion.

The school nurse at Falmouth High, Shirley Cullinane, estimates that about half of the students there are sexually active. While many of these boys and girls are promiscuous, and boastful about their promiscuity, some of the girls complain about feeling pressured to have sex. "Some of the [older] boys have four and five girls," she contends. Why do the girls stand for being treated as nothing better than concubines? Because, it seems, they (and especially the younger ones) like the attention and the social prestige of dating, even though it often presumes unwelcome sex.

Cullinane, the mother of seven, tries to talk to Falmouth High students about her own innocent high-school years, and about her celibate two-year courtship with her husband. "They think I'm lying . . . when I say I was a virgin when I got married," she says of their reaction. "The girls think there is no way you can go out with a man for two years and not have sex with him."

But Cullinane, like the Health Issues instructors, does not advocate abstinence. Rather, in the conviction that she cannot change student behavior, she tries to encourage students to protect themselves from pregnancy and sexual disease by using condoms.

This effort has not been crowned with success. Cullinane gave out approximately five condoms a week last winter, when the condom-availability program was instituted. These, she says, went mostly to girls. But in the first two months of the 1992-93 school year, despite consistently offering them to youngsters she knew were sexually active, she was able to dispense only two condoms—both to the same freshman male.

Why do the students spurn condoms, even when the school nurse offers them free of charge? Some refuse on the basis that they dull sexual feeling. But most, Cullinane believes, refuse because they "trust" the people with whom they are having sexual relations to be free of sexual diseases. There is little fear of HIV infection among Falmouth's youth, probably because these children know—despite all the propaganda to the contrary—that it poses little danger to non-drug-using heterosexuals.

Yet where other sexually transmitted diseases (STD's) are concerned, Falmouth's teenagers are simply reckless. School health instructors issue warnings about the risks of diseases other than AIDS, but these go in one ear and out the other. Even the Falmouth Schools' Health Coordinator, Helen Ladd, laments that students do not care what they are told about VD "risks." "I would be hesitant to sell my prevention program on the basis of numbers," she says. And well she should be hesitant. According to Massachusetts Board of Health statistics, the incidence of chlamydia among 15- to 19-year-olds in Falmouth has increased 300 percent in the past four years alone.

Moreover, in the nine years since the Health Issues sex-education course was conceived at Falmouth High, so also have an impressive number of babies been conceived. Teenage pregnancy in town is in fact rising by 10 percent a year, and is cutting across all socioeconomic barriers.

While many of the babies conceived to teenagers are aborted, single motherhood is also on the rise. In 1992, 49 babies were born to teenage mothers in Falmouth (up from 38 in 1991). Forty-five of these mothers were single, their average age the youngest ever—17.9 years.

Faced with the clear failure of school policies and programs regarding pregnancy and venereal disease, what does the school health administration have to suggest? More of everything. For one, more condoms: Cullinane says that students do not really like the condoms the school offers, so it will be changing brands in the hope of finding a more comfortable fit and appealing look. For another, more information about the spread and symptoms of sexual disease. For still another, more suspension of moral judgment on sexual activity, so that children will feel "comfortable" about coming for advice and condoms. (Yet according to Cullinane herself, girls now "come in four or five at a time . . . and sit around my office talking about . . . oral sex.") And then, more warnings about risk-taking, and even more mandatory courses—presumably offering more discussion of "defensive strategies," more disparagement of "gender roles," and more "alternatives" in sexual behavior.

The "more of everything" theory is a promising one, no doubt, for those who make a living off adolescent anxiety and sex. But it is hardly the answer to the well-being of Falmouth's teenagers, who are already alienated by the profusion of hygienic "information" (and misinformation) in the classroom, who refuse the "support system" of sexual counseling, and who want nothing to do with sexual "alternatives."

And it is the "alternatives" which make them most uncomfortable. Indeed, while students display skepticism toward the school's crusade against AIDS, STD's, and date rape, they express outspoken ridicule toward its crusade for sexual diversity. In particular they remain relentlessly and vocally intolerant of homosexuality, openly joking about it in the classroom in obvious efforts to gall the instructors.

Never mind that former students of the high school come back to the Health Issues classroom to recount sad tales of homophobic prejudice and humiliation, or that AIDS victims are dragged in to testify to the ravages of the gay community;

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never mind that homosexual acts are allotted "equal time" with heterosexual acts in classroom discussion; never mind that instructors encourage children to view homosexuality as a common sexual preference, citing the long-since discredited figure of 10 percent for the incidence of homosexual behavior (the real incidence seems to be around 2 percent at most). Few of these young people are being persuaded to regard homosexuality as anything other than a sexual affliction worthy at best of pity, at worst of mockery and undisguised hostility.

"How would you react if a boy, here, at Falmouth High asked you out?" a teacher demands of the males during a classroom discussion of "homophobia." The answers she receives are so brutal as to prompt one to pray there are no budding homosexuals present in the classroom.

Instructors tend to blame student resistance to the portrayal of homosexuality as a viable and wholesome life-style on backward parents who instill "traditional" values at home. But there is little evidence that parents are forcing untoward prejudices on their young. Rather the opposite. Parents who support the condom-availability program note the innate conservatism of their children in the matter of homosexuality with some regret and dismay, many expressing the hope that they will eventually learn to "live and let live" without sitting so cruelly in judgment. Many other parents also acknowledge that classroom discussion of homosexuality taps into deep-seated adolescent fears—both of identification and confrontation with homosexuals.

But if these parents would only awaken from their school-day nap, they would find that the issue of homosexuality is not the only component of sex education which is shaking down their childrens' delicate and immature sexual constitutions. All the various components of programs like the one in Falmouth add up to a philosophy which, in extolling the validity and pleasure of the sexual experience without reference to love, intimacy, or long-term commitment, while simultaneously sending the message that males are rapacious predators and females helpless victims, has left children feeling resentful, angry, and confused—and even more vulnerable than ever to disease and early pregnancy.

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The Case Against Anita Hill

Terry Eastland

On Friday, September 28, 1991, the Senate Judiciary Committee sent to the full Senate the nomination of Judge Clarence Thomas to the Supreme Court. His confirmation seemed assured. But late on October 5, a Saturday, word of what *Newsday* would publish in its Sunday editions made the wires: Anita F. Hill—a former employee of Thomas's from 1981 to 1983 at both the Education Department and the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and now a University of Oklahoma law professor—said that Thomas had sexually harassed her. Somebody had leaked Hill's charge, which she had made in a confidential statement to the Judiciary Committee on September 23. On Sunday morning, National Public Radio's Nina Totenberg, also the recipient of a leak, went on the air with the same story.

On Monday, Hill reiterated her charge at a press conference in Oklahoma, and the Judiciary Committee decided to hold public hearings. On Friday, before the committee and with a huge national television audience looking on, Hill repeated her accusation, adding new details, and Thomas categorically denied her charges. Assorted witnesses for Hill and for Thomas testified on Saturday and into the late evening on Sunday, the final day of this special hearing. The committee did not pronounce a verdict on who was telling the truth. An end to the controversy—for the moment—came on Tuesday when the full Senate approved the Thomas nomination by the extraordinarily narrow vote of 52 to 48.

Polls taken at the time showed that twice as many Americans believed Thomas's denial as Hill's accusation. Polls taken exactly a year later showed that 44 percent of Americans now believed Hill, and only 34 percent believed Thomas. Another poll taken at the end of 1992 found that 51 percent of women believed Thomas had harassed Hill, up from 27 percent in October 1991.

Oddly, no new facts about the merits of Hill's allegation had surfaced between the end of the special hearing and these late-1992 polls. Indeed, as the *Boston Globe* commented, the matter of "who was being truthful" was "virtually boycotted by the media." And as judicial decorum would insist, Thomas, on this matter, had been—and continues to be—as silent as the marble around him.

What may account, at least in part, for the change reflected in the new polls was the discussion of sexual harassment carried on in newspapers and on television and in countless public forums, in the wake of the Thomas hearings. Hill herself, in her many public appearances on college campuses and elsewhere, avoided discussion of the particulars of her charge and focused instead on the evils of sexual harassment in general. In this new, "more aware" environment, more women began to make claims of sexual harassment, and more women (mostly Democrats), citing sexual harassment as one of the problems they wished to address, ran for elective office.

So it could be that, with consciousness duly raised, more people conjectured that Hill *must* have been telling the truth. Nor did it hurt Hill that Thomas was often vilified for his judicial opinions while she was lionized in the news and entertainment media and given various awards and honors. A drive is under way to endow a chair for her at her law school.

Yet this past April, just when Anita Hill and her supporters may have thought they had won her case against Thomas, as judged by the American people, David Brock, a staff writer for the *American Spectator*, delivered a devastating blow to that case in the form of a book entitled *The Real Anita Hill: The Untold Story.** A runaway best-seller, Brock's book may be causing yet another shift in public opinion on the question of whether Hill was telling the truth.

The Real Anita Hill is not about whether Thomas should have been confirmed. Nor does it seek to reform the seemingly off-track (at least under conditions of divided government) judicial-confirmation process. Nor does it join the debate over how serious an offense

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Terry Eastland, who contributed "The Limits of Term Limits" to our February issue, has recently been appointed executive editor of *Forbes MediaGuide*.

* Free Press, 438 pp., $24.95.

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sexual harassment is. Brock is concerned only with whether sexual harassment occurred in this particular instance. And after much investigation and analysis, he concludes that it did not: "By any reasonable evidentiary standard," he writes, "[Thomas] should be vindicated of Hill's charges."

When the book was first published, sales no doubt were helped by generally favorable reviews in many newspapers, especially the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*. In its May 24 issue, however, in what Howard Kurtz, the media critic of the *Washington Post*, described as "a fierce liberal counterattack," the *New Yorker* came out with a hostile review by two *Wall Street Journal* reporters, Jane Mayer and Jill Abramson, who themselves are scheduled to publish a rival book next year about the controversy, advertised as "the inside story of how the Bush administration sold a Supreme Court Justice to the American people." As though on cue, liberal columnists like Anthony Lewis, Molly Ivins, and Ellen Goodman, among others, used Mayer and Abramson to denounce Brock's book.

Brock responded to Mayer and Abramson in a single-spaced, eight-page letter, which the *New Yorker* refused to print. (The magazine's fact-checkers assured the editor that Brock had scored no points.) Mayer and Abramson also refused to debate a willing Brock on the air or in any other setting. In their *New Yorker* piece, they hint that their forthcoming book will report new information, and perhaps it will. But in any event, judgment about the merits of Hill's charge can never be conclusive. As Brock himself says, only two people know for sure just what, if anything, happened, and unless one of them confesses to lying, the debate will never end.

That said, the publication of *The Real Anita Hill* and the ensuing discussion offer an opportunity to review the remarkable events of October 1991 and what led to them. More is known today than was known when Hill and Thomas testified, and certain conclusions do seem warranted.

ONE of these conclusions is that Anita Hill, in making her accusation to the Judiciary Committee, did not—as was originally claimed—come forward merely of her own will but was, as Brock puts it, "drawn forward" by Senate staff members who were zealous opponents of Thomas's nomination. Mayer and Abramson do not take issue with Brock's discussion of the behind-the-scenes effort by these staffers, hugely assisted by the liberal interest groups that during the Reagan and Bush administrations specialized in opposing Supreme Court nominations; indeed, they write, this part of *The Real Anita Hill* is "the most successful."

Even so, they continue, "the reason the reporting is so much more thorough here than elsewhere may be that it is largely based on the special counsel's report on the leak—a document that was itself based on hundreds of interviews."

Mayer and Abramson are suggesting that Brock did not add much to what Special Counsel Peter Fleming, appointed by the Senate to investigate the leak of Hill's accusation, said in his 171-page report, released on May 5, 1992.

As a close reading of *The Real Anita Hill* shows, Brock did make use of the invaluable Fleming report, but his account also adds important new information, gleaned from his own reporting. Still, even if Brock had used only the Fleming report in demonstrating how Hill was drawn forward, he would have performed a useful public service.

For when the Senate decided to authorize an investigation into the leak, Washington journalists derided the whole idea ("a farce," said Clarence Page; "ridiculous," said Chris Matthews; and "stupid," said Nina Totenberg, who, according to Fleming, destroyed a document in her possession that originated in the Senate). Then, when the report was released, it received next-day-only coverage, and the stories focused on Fleming's bottom line, that he had been unable to identify the leaker.

Some of these stories were grossly inaccurate, and few outlets bothered to report in detail or to analyze what Fleming found.* Indeed, the news pages of Mayer and Abramson's own paper, the *Wall Street Journal*, allotted only six paragraphs to a report that describes in great detail what Mayer and Abramson themselves, in the *New Yorker*, now call an "unquestionably important" nexus—the one linking the interest groups, the Senate staffers, and the press.

BROCK begins his account of how Hill came to make her charge against Thomas with the story of a Norwalk, California, woman named Susan Hoerchner.

It was Monday, July 1, 1991, the day Bush nominated Clarence Thomas, that Hoerchner, watching the announcement on television, told her husband, "He's the one!"—meaning that Thomas was the man who had sexually harassed her friend Anita Hill ten years earlier when she and Hill had both worked in Washington.

That same day Hoerchner, who had not spoken to Hill in seven years, got her old friend's number in Oklahoma and called her. Hoerchner asked whether Hill had heard the news about Thomas and said she could not believe it since he was such a "pig." Hoerchner also asked Hill whether she would say anything about Thomas. Hill did not answer directly—a response that surprised Hoerchner. Hoerchner then requested that Hill release her from an "oath" she had taken

* Key exceptions were *Roll Call* (in a piece by Glenn R. Simpson); the editorial page of the *Wall Street Journal* (in a column by Paul Gigot); and the *American Spectator* (in a Presswatch column by me).

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ten years earlier never to discuss the matter with anyone else, and Hill agreed.

Fleming has none of this in his report; Brock got it from the transcript of an interview with Hoerchner by the Judiciary Committee on October 10, 1991. This document was sealed and never made public, but Brock was able to obtain a copy.

He also managed to obtain another interview that was also sealed by the committee—this one with Gary Liman Phillips, an old friend of Hill's from law-school days (at Yale) and now a government attorney in Washington. Brock reveals on the basis of this document that Hill called Phillips three weeks after Bush had named Thomas; when Phillips asked Hill what she thought of the Thomas nomination, she told him for the first time in their relationship that she had left Washington in 1983 because Thomas had sexually harassed her. Hill also said that she was not going to tell anyone else about this matter.

It would thus appear that Hill both wanted to go after Thomas—she did release Hoerchner from her oath, and she did initiate the call to Phillips—and did not want to go after him, at least not publicly. Her intentions, at this point, are unclear. Nor is it clear whether Hoerchner spoke to anyone else about the charge. What is known, from the committee interview obtained by Brock, is that Phillips relayed what Hill had told him to two other people in Washington.

A few days later, an unidentified guest at a Washington dinner party attended by Nan Aron and George Kassouf of the Alliance for Justice—a liberal interest group that had opposed Thomas's nomination to the federal appeals court in 1989 and was prepared to oppose his elevation to the Supreme Court—said that he had heard about a woman teaching law in Oklahoma who had worked for Thomas at the EEOC and who claimed he had sexually harassed her.

This dinner party is the point where Fleming's report begins. Both Aron and Kassouf told Senate staffers what they had heard. Whether or not Anita Hill wanted her story to travel this far, it now "took on a life of its own," as Brock puts it. On July 28, the *Boston Globe* quoted an official of one of the liberal interest groups as saying that these organizations were "withholding some damaging information about Thomas's record, and will time its release to achieve maximum impact." The damaging information might have been a reference to the Hill allegation. The quote itself reveals the intentions of Thomas's opponents, although it appears certain that they did not invent but were handed Anita Hill's story.

Aron and Kassouf were able to identify the Oklahoma law professor as Anita Hill. They passed on her name and her accusation to an aide to Senator Howard Metzenbaum, who had earlier voted against Thomas's nomination both to chair the EEOC in 1986 and to sit on the federal appeals court in Washington, D.C., in 1989. Another Metzenbaum aide, Gail Laster, made the first known contact between Hill and the Senate on September 5. Laster did not ask whether Hill had been sexually harassed by Thomas, and Hill did not volunteer this information, although she did advise Laster to look into the possibility of sexual harassment on Thomas's part.

Meanwhile, word of Hill's allegation reached a Labor Committee aide to Senator Edward Kennedy by the name of Ricki Seidman (now a Clinton White House official). On September 6, Seidman also called Hill, telling her what she had heard. Three days later, in another phone conversation, Seidman became the first Senate staffer to whom Hill claimed that she had been sexually harassed by Thomas, although she did not offer many specifics.

Seidman suggested that Hill might be more comfortable discussing the matter with someone she knew—an acquaintance from her law-school days named James Brudney, who was now a Metzenbaum aide working for the Labor Committee. According to Fleming, "Hill began the conversation [with Brudney] by saying she did not wish to testify publicly." But Brudney allowed her to believe that she could remain anonymous. He then told Hill's story to Harriet Grant, a key aide to Senator Joseph Biden, chairman of the Judiciary Committee to which the complaint would have to be made.

Grant did not call Hill because committee procedures require that contact must be initiated by the person making the complaint. So Brudney urged Hill to call Grant. Hill did so, but insisted to Grant on anonymity—a condition not allowed by the committee.

According to Brock, Susan Hoerchner now offered herself as a corroborating witness, an essential element in making a credible harassment claim. Both Hill and Hoerchner thought that the anonymous charge, when given to the committee, would cause the nominee to withdraw, and thus Hill would not have to testify publicly.

In a series of phone conversations, Brudney, knowing that an anonymous charge could not be investigated by the committee and thus was apt to go nowhere, finally persuaded Hill to move from anonymity to confidentiality. Under that arrangement only Thomas and members of the committee could be told of her charge. Her change of mind on this point was at least in part influenced by a conversation with Susan Deller Ross, an expert in sexual-harassment law at Georgetown University Law Center; the ever-present Brudney had asked Ross to intervene with Hill.

However, when informed by Biden's aide, Harriet Grant, that once she made her allegation, the FBI would investigate it, Hill pulled back. But then, at Hoerchner's and Brudney's urging, Hill finally decided to draft a statement.

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On September 23, she faxed it to the committee. Thomas did not withdraw. Five days later the committee voted on his nomination. And then the leak(s) to *Newsday* and Totenberg occurred.

Fleming concludes that Anita Hill was not one of the leakers. Brock concurs. But Brock also concludes, plausibly, that the leakers were Brudney, to whom Fleming's report leads but whom it does not name, and Senator Paul Simon. Simon has always denied leaking, while Brudney—who quietly left Metzenbaum's staff after Fleming's report appeared, and now teaches law at Ohio State—has declined to speak on the matter. Whether or not one or the other or both leaked, someone—a Senate staffer or a Senator himself—did leak, and the leaker or leakers made a false statement about it to Fleming, and therefore to the Senate.*

It is to Brock's credit that he regards the question of who leaked as worthy of journalistic inquiry. There has been a media blackout on this question, too. Totenberg and *Newsday* have steadfastly refused to discuss their sources, and other journalists have closed ranks in their favor and against pursuing a question that a non-journalist might think important.

THAT Anita Hill was drawn forward to make her accusation, and that some person or persons in the Senate leaked to the press, in violation not only of the due process which both an accuser and an accused deserve, but also of Senate rules, are, of course, irrelevant to whether Hill's charge is valid. To repeat, short of a public confession by Hill or Thomas, we are unlikely ever to be absolutely certain of the truth. Still, thanks to David Brock, and on the basis of the information we currently have, it is possible to say that Anita Hill's case is very weak indeed.

No eyewitnesses to the harassment alleged by Hill have ever come forward. In sexual-harassment cases, that is not unusual. Obviously, however, the alleged victim's word alone cannot constitute proof that a crime has been committed. As Brock points out, other elements are needed as evidence: first and most importantly, witnesses who can testify that the accuser told them at the time of the alleged harassment of being harassed; second, a pattern of harassment on the part of the accused with other women; and, third, other evidence about the accused, such as a penchant for subjecting women to unwelcome talk about sex and pornography.†

As for contemporaneous corroboration, four witnesses were publicly presented during the special hearing. Yet in her interview with the FBI, Hill said that Susan Hoerchner was the only person she had ever told about the harassment by Thomas. There is no question that Hoerchner and Hill talked during 1981, or that during one of their conversations Hill mentioned to Hoerchner that she was being sexually harassed. In question are just *when* in 1981 this conversation took place, and whether Hill actually named Clarence Thomas as the harasser.

These issues are in question because, as Brock shows, in arguably the most controversial chapter of his book, there is what might be called a first Hoerchner and a second Hoerchner. The first Hoerchner exists until a critical point in her pre-testimony interview with the Judiciary Committee, which Brock alone among journalists seems to have in his possession; the second Hoerchner comes alive at that point and remains with us to this day.

During her pre-testimony interview, Hoerchner said that she had been uncertain, when she heard on television that Thomas had been nominated, as to whether he in fact was Hill's harasser. She told her interviewers that on that day in July 1991, "Anita, by telephone, verified that he was the one." For Brock, this raises the question of whether Hoerchner's memory is accurate. As a chronology prepared by the Judiciary Committee shows, shortly before this interview, Hoerchner told Harriet Grant that it was in the *spring of 1981* that Hill had told her of being sexually harassed by Thomas. But this would have been impossible, since Hill did not meet Thomas until she went to work for him in September 1981, and it was not until three months later that, according to Hill's committee testimony, the harassment began.

Questioned in her pre-testimony interview about the date of this critical phone conversation, Hoerchner continued to locate it prior to September 1981—until, that is, one of her attorneys asked for time to speak to her off-the-record. Back on the record, the second Hoerchner emerged. Now she was unsure about when the phone conversation had taken place, but she was—and still is—sure that the call had occurred when Hill was working for Thomas.

Which Hoerchner is one to believe? By her own account she moved from Washington to California in September 1981, just when Hill went to work for Thomas. She said that the critical conversation about Hill's being sexually harassed came in the context of weekly local calls while both she and Hill were still working in Washington, that in subsequent calls she asked about the harassment but Hill would not discuss it, and that once she moved to California she lost touch with Hill.

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* When members of the executive branch are thought to have told lies to or made false statements to or withheld information from Congress, their criminal prosecution is often demanded; a different standard appears to hold with respect to members of Congress and their aides.

† It bears noting that under the relevant federal law, anyone alleging sexual harassment must do so within 180 days. Hill's allegation would have been a non-starter in a court of law. The court of politics, of course, is vastly different.

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Examining these statements, Brock concludes that the first Hoerchner remembered correctly when the phone conversation occurred; but if this is true, it follows that Hill could not have named Thomas, and that, in 1991, Hoerchner must have been putting Thomas's name into the blank space in an equation. (Brock raises the possibility that Hill was sexually harassed at the law firm where she was working before she went to work for Thomas at the Education Department.)

Hoerchner turned down Brock's request for an interview. Mayer and Abramson, who believe the second Hoerchner, apparently have interviewed her. Hoerchner, meanwhile, continues to change her original story, stating most recently to *Time* that she did not lose touch with Hill "until much, much later, after she left the EEOC," in July 1983. Any evaluation of Hoerchner's credibility must reckon with the two Hoerchners, and the very changeability of her story means that she is not a compelling corroborating witness.

There are also problems with each of Hill's other three witnesses. In neither their pre-testimony committee interviews nor in their actual appearances before the committee could John Carr and Joel Paul name Thomas as Hill's harasser. Ellen Wells did name Thomas, but she provided no details of his alleged behavior.

According to Mayer and Abramson, Hill told more people than just the four. If so, this catches Hill in another change of story, as now she would be saying that she mentioned the harassment to not just one (Hoerchner), and not just four (Hoerchner, Carr, Wells, and Paul), but to more than four (unnamed for now). While one should be open to the possibility of new, trustworthy evidence, one should not discount the possibility of credulous and ideologically sympathetic reporters being "spun" by Anita Hill's partisans seeking now, in the wake of Brock's book, to create new facts to buttress her original claim.

Moving on to the second type of evidence: was there a pattern of sexual harassment by Thomas against other women? The answer is that no such pattern has ever materialized. There was Angela Wright, who worked under Thomas at the EEOC until he fired her. But, as Brock points out, Wright, who did not testify, denied in her committee interview that she was charging Thomas with harassment. Nor has any other woman made such a charge against him. Moreover, with the exception of Wright (who has serious credibility problems of her own), not one of the many other women who worked for Thomas believed Anita Hill's story.

Nor, according to these women, did Thomas ever engage in sexually abusive or pornographic talk, the third essential element. Indeed, many who worked with Thomas said that he insisted on proper language and behavior. Pamela Talkin, a liberal Democrat who served as his chief of staff at the EEOC, told the Judiciary Committee that Thomas "has a feminist's understanding of sexual politics. He is a man who loathes locker-room talk. This is a man who, when I had momentary lapses of language, looked discomfited and never responded in kind. This is a man who looked at his shoes when other men were craning their necks to look at a woman."

So much for the third type of evidence. And so much for Hill's case.

Her own credibility, moreover, is also weak. One of the most persuasive parts of Brock's book is a chapter in which he compares what Hill said she did with the accounts of other witnesses and various third parties. Brock finds that "her sworn testimony and public statements either conflict with the facts or omit certain incidents entirely." Mayer and Abramson do not argue with Brock's analysis here; they even commend him for doing "a skillful job of identifying numerous inconsistencies in the public and private record of the Hill-Thomas dispute, highlighting contradictions and questioning motives."

Hill testified that, despite being harassed, she decided to follow Thomas when he left the Education Department to go to the EEOC because, in part, she did not know that as a Schedule-A (i.e., career) attorney at Education, she would have been assured continued employment there. She also testified that she did not know who would succeed Thomas.

To check all this, Brock interviewed Andrew Fishel, head of personnel for the civil-rights office at Education during Hill's time there. Fishel personally briefed Hill when she first came to work and he informed her that as a Schedule-A attorney she could not be fired without cause and that she could remain in her job no matter what happened to her boss. When she was leaving to go to the EEOC, Fishel asked Hill what kind of appointment she would have. It was a Schedule A. "She said she liked being a Schedule-A lawyer because she was not subject to dismissal. She clearly knew she could have kept her job at Education."

Furthermore, in an interview with Brock, Harry Singleton, Thomas's successor at Education, repeated what he had told the Senate in 1991 in a sworn affidavit, which was never publicly released: that Hill knew who would replace Thomas because he, Singleton, had talked to her a number of times and asked her to stay on.

Brock has other examples. FBI officials—one male, the other female—who interviewed Hill on September 23, 1991 each filed written statements with the agency pointing out discrepancies between Hill's testimony before the committee and what she had told them. Later, a supervisory agent separately interviewed the two agents, who again said that Hill had told them a different story from the one she gave the committee on national television.

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Also, under questioning by Senator Patrick Leahy about whom she shared her statement with—a question relevant to finding out who might have leaked to the press—Hill withheld from the committee the fact, established in the Fleming report, that she had faxed a copy of that statement on September 25 to James Brudney. It also appears that Hill lied when she told the committee that "no one asked me to leave the [law] firm [in 1981] in any way": a partner at the firm, John Burke, said that he told her it would be in her professional interests to leave.

Finally, Brock has a chapter usefully debunking the myth that Anita Hill was a Republican who had been a Bork supporter. This was way off-base. When Robert Bork was nominated to the Supreme Court in 1987, Hill, who had been a student at Yale when Bork taught there, expressed disagreement both with the way he was treated by his opponents *and* with the substance of Bork's legal views. Hill was not sufficiently Republican, if Republican at all, to win a Schedule-C political appointment in the Reagan administration. (She tried.) Mayer and Abramson contribute to the confusion by referring to Hill when she was working for Thomas as a "Reagan administration official." She was nothing of the kind. She worked in the Reagan administration, as did any number of nonpolitical (and non-Reaganite) appointees like herself.

Brock also shows that in her years as a law professor, Hill has cast her lot with the political Left. And since the events of October 1991, she has become a heroine of the Left. The revelation of what Hill was and is politically suggests a motive for her willingness to be drawn forward by Brudney and company to make her charge.

THE publication of *The Real Anita Hill* and the controversy it has provoked permit some observations about journalism, and about political liberalism. On many pages in this book Brock is criticizing the work of one journalist or another. This is not the way to win friends among colleagues, but there is no good reason why the work of journalists should be exempted from scrutiny. And in the case at hand, many of the journalistic targets at which Brock aims deserve his fire.

For his own part, Brock has shown that he can take the fire of journalists in return. The exchange between Brock and Mayer and Abramson, however, has proved unsatisfying. The *New Yorker* killed a dialogue by refusing to publish Brock's response, and Mayer and Abramson have begged off a public engagement with him on the ground that they are still working on their book—a fact which did not, however, prevent them from reviewing Brock's.

The Real Anita Hill demonstrates that in the Hill-Thomas matter, political liberalism took a beating. I do not mean by this that the Senate confirmed a judicial conservative, but rather that respect for civil liberties and formal governing procedures—once hallmarks of liberalism—did not matter to some who call themselves liberal. For many, and not just those who did the deeds, the end of stopping Clarence Thomas justified the means of "drawing forward" Anita Hill and eventually leaking her allegation. Whatever else may someday be learned about the Hill-Thomas case, that deplorable sequence of events will continue to deserve the censure of all who take seriously the morality of the means we employ as a self-governing people.

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New Looks at American Jewish History

Robert M. Seltzer

IN THE minds of many historians, and of many Jews as well, American Jewish history is comprised mainly of the travails of immigrant ancestors, the pursuit by grandparents and parents of prosperity and the American way of life, the founding of this or that Jewish organization, and the assorted biographies of Jews who have made their presence felt in national life. As an academic field, American Jewish history is still frequently regarded by professional historians as so much filiopietism, current events, and local color: anecdotes, in short.

The historiographical achievements of the last four decades, however, should have dispelled all such notions. If, in 1892, at the first meeting of the American Jewish Historical Society (AJHS), it was declared that patriotism required every American ethnic group to record its contributions for posterity, by the 1940's the imperatives of the field had broadened considerably, through the work, among others, of my teacher Jacob Rader Marcus, the founder of the American Jewish Archives. Today, there are almost 100 local Jewish historical societies in North America and 63 professors at American universities who consider American Jewish history their primary field of interest. There is, as well, a growing monographic literature of high quality and an impressive roster of journals devoted to the study of the American Jewish past.[1]

A MEASURE of what has been achieved in the last decades can be seen in two recently-published comprehensive histories. Howard M. Sachar's *A History of the Jews in America*[2] contains a bibliography of 73 pages for a total of at least 1,500 items. (Unfortunately, his book has no footnotes.) In the five volumes of *The Jewish People in America*,[3] a work sponsored by the American Jewish Historical Society in honor of its centennial, the scholarly apparatus, especially in the endnotes and bibliographical essays, gives daunting testimony to the advanced condition of modern American Jewish historical study.

In its methods and procedures, Sachar's lively book lies midway between the older and the newer historiography. Sachar, whose previous work ranges from a survey of Jewish history since the 18th century to six volumes on Israel and the Middle East, here summarizes topic after topic with facility and wit, incorporating into his narrative piquant and little-known details.

In Sachar's telling, Jewish connections crop up in unexpected places. Alexander Hamilton, denied admission to Anglican educational institutions because of his illegitimate birth, studied in the school established by the Jewish community of Jamaica. (As late as 1830 there were probably more Jews in the West Indies than in the United States.) Daniel Boone, having been employed by three pioneer Kentucky Jews, recruited a Jewish lad as his assistant; this fellow would become the first Jew initiated into the Shawnee Indian nation. A Jewish councilman in Dodge City (Kansas) appointed the celebrated sharpshooter Wyatt Earp as U.S. marshal; Earp is buried in a California Jewish cemetery thanks to the San Francisco Jewish woman who became his common-law wife.

Signs of Jewish enterprise span the history of America: at the end of the 18th century, the Monsanto family had built Natchez, Mississippi's wharf facilities, and helped the town become a thriving river port. In 1882, in one of various attempts to turn Jews into sturdy farmers, 60 Russian Jewish immigrants were escorted by rail to an agricultural settlement that was to be called Beersheba, Kansas. Julia Richman, daughter of German Reform Jews, became the first Jewish

ROBERT M. SELTZER is professor of Jewish history at Hunter College and Graduate School of the City University of New York, author of *Jewish People, Jewish Thought*, and co-editor of a forthcoming volume, *The Americanization of the Jews*, to be published next year by New York University Press.

[1] For up-to-date overviews of the basic literature, see Jonathan D. Sarna, "American Jewish History," in *Modern Judaism* 10 (1990), pp. 343-65, and his informative chapter, "The American Jewish Experience," in Barry W. Holtz, *The Schocken Guide to Jewish Books* (1992), pp. 108-27. Very useful is the article by Jack Wertheimer, "American Jewish History," in the volume he has edited under the title *The Modern Jewish Experience: A Reader's Guide* (New York University Press, 1993), pp. 52-61.

[2] Knopf, 1,051 pp., $40.00.

[3] Henry L. Feingold, general editor. Vol I: *A Time for Planting: The First Migration, 1654-1820*, by Eli Faber, 224 pp. Vol. II: *A Time for Gathering: The Second Migration, 1820-1880*, by Hasia R. Diner, 352 pp. Vol. III: *A Time for Building: The Third Migration, 1880-1920*, by Gerald Sorin, 344 pp. Vol. IV: *A Time for Searching: Entering the Mainstream, 1920-1945*, by Henry L. Feingold, 376 pp. Vol. V: *A Time for Healing: American Jewry Since World War II*, by Edward S. Shapiro, 352 pp. Johns Hopkins University Press, $145 the set; $29.95 each volume.

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public-school principal in New York; in her district, "children lapsing into Yiddish had their mouths washed out with soap." But I too am lapsing into American Jewish history by anecdote.

More than half of Sachar's volume deals with the 60 years since the beginning of the Great Depression, the period that will probably be looked on by future historians as the Golden Age of American Jewry. Among these chapters is an account of the "Jewish impact on American culture" which includes a succinct if opinionated survey of Jewish intellectuals and artists, many of them refugees who propelled America into the front rank of almost every field: social science (Alexander Gerschenkron, Paul Lazarsfeld, and others); political theory (Leo Strauss, Hans Morgenthau, and others); medical research (here we are given *inter alia* a capsule history of Mount Sinai Hospital in New York and an account of the famous turn-of-the-century Flexner report reforming American medical training); painting (Chaim Gross, Ben Shahn, and others); musical composition (Ernest Bloch, Aaron Copland, Leonard Bernstein); songwriting, drama, poetry, the novel, literary criticism, publishing, political commentary, and so forth. (There are, to be sure, omissions and mistakes of fact in Sachar's compendium, and the reader is advised to proceed with caution.)

Sachar has created a frame for his book, one that is meant to convey the reassuring hope that American Jewry, comfortable in a way Jews never were in Europe, will remain dynamically intertwined with its "senior partner," Israel, in the unfolding destiny of the Jewish people. The book opens with a description of the German Jewish ancestors of a family named Myers arriving in Springfield, Illinois, in 1865, on the same day as Abraham Lincoln's funeral train. At the end, Sachar returns to this family, which he sees as "a palimpsest of the United States itself" and an emblem of the present state of American Jewry. Some have assimilated; others have intermarried but remain active in the local temple and are raising their children as Jews; still others have deepened their easygoing, Midwestern style of Jewishness through the study of Hebrew, a stay in a kibbutz, marriage with a *sabra*, or a longing for the Jewish land where they feel especially at home.

SACHAR'S measured optimism is usefully contrasted with the generally sober tone adopted by the authors of *The Jewish People in America*. Although each volume in this series—which has been skillfully arranged and edited by Henry L. Feingold—has a somewhat different point of view and style, all proceed in basically the same way, treating their designated phases of American Jewish history topically so that geography, economics, religious institutions, secular organizations, politics, and culture are covered systematically and in relation to one another. In addition, one of the most valuable features of the first three volumes is the space given to descriptions of the Old World background of Jewish immigrants to America. Although these newcomers were creating a community in an environment without parallel in Jewish history, they brought with them expectations, values, and skills that shaped their response to their new home.

In *A Time for Planting* (the title of each book in the series echoes a phrase from Ecclesiastes 3:1-8), Eli Faber indicates that, apart from a few places such as Massachusetts and Connecticut where Jews were made to feel unwelcome until well into the 19th century, the few thousand Jews who settled in colonial America quickly adapted to the unprecedented opportunities for social intercourse with non-Jews and the broad political rights available to them.

The early Sephardis were not only pioneers, "the first to experiment with a new kind of Jewish community in the emerging modern world"; they also maintained an "outward, cosmopolitan gaze," remaining in touch with the trans-Atlantic world of trade and family connections. Thus, the Lopezes, Portuguese Marranos who left Lisbon in the 1730's, arrived (after a stay in London) in Newport, Rhode Island, where they were circumcised, dropped their Christian names (Duarte Lopez became Aaron and Gabriel became David), and began their ascent to wealth through participating in the lucrative rum, hardware, and slave trade with West Africa and the Caribbean. Besides Newport and New York, other colonial communities soon appeared in Philadelphia, Lancaster, Charleston, and Savannah, and many members of those communities maintained connections across the Atlantic.

Hasia R. Diner, the author of *A Time for Gathering* (covering the period 1820-1880), emphasizes that the German-speaking Jews who arrived in large numbers during the middle decades of the 19th century came from many different areas of Central Europe (and parts of Western and Eastern Europe as well) and thus constituted a population far more diverse than is usually imagined. She devotes considerable attention to their Old World occupations, what they knew of America back in Europe, and the distinctively Jewish complex of reasons that drove and lured them across the ocean.

From a population of 2,500 in 1825, the Jews of America totaled 240,000 by 1880. According to Diner, those who arrived in this migration were quite similar to the truly immense numbers of Jews from Russia and Eastern Europe who came after them, and she inveighs against "historians of American Jewry, being largely the children and grandchildren of the East European immigrants themselves, [who] have painted a stilted portrait of these earlier American Jews."

Diner maintains that beyond the conspicuous and well-known group of brilliantly successful Jewish businessmen and bankers who did as-

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similate quickly (the "Our Crowd" Jews), the major portion of German-speaking immigrants were impoverished newcomers coping, often in a frontier environment, with the help of family and communal aid and eager to retain their Judaism. "German Jews," she writes, "demonstrated a deep wish to live as Jews despite their decision to venture out into places where few accoutrements of Jewish life awaited them." The associations and organizations they created—B'nai B'rith, YMHA's, the many synagogues that replaced earlier and simpler Jewish communal structures, the new Sunday Schools—all this is evidence for Diner of a commitment to hold on to Jewish identity and reshape it in light of their new ambience. She insists that despite the seemingly inexorable abandonment of traditional Jewish practice by the movement toward Reform, pre-1880 American Jewish culture was not, as some have asserted, "shallow, materialistic, and derivative."

IN HER commendable effort to revise the commonly accepted picture, Diner may overstate her case. But her general point is well taken. Acculturation, as the sociologists have taught us, does not necessarily lead to outright assimilation; it may equally result in heightened self-consciousness. This, at any rate, is one lesson that comes through especially strongly in the next volume, *A Time for Building*, by Gerald Sorin.

Sorin, too, offers an overview of the Old World roots of the Jewish migration from Eastern Europe that began in 1880 and resulted, by 1920, in a community constituting nearly 23 percent of the Jews of the world. He points to the endemic poverty of the Russian Pale of Jewish settlement and adjacent regions, the social stratification, and the confined Jewish energies of the "classic" *shtetl*. East European Jewry was, he emphasizes, in a state of social upheaval and ideological ferment—migration within the Pale and a Jewish cultural renaissance were well under way before most of the immigrants set out for America.

When he comes to describing their arrival on these shores, Sorin pays due attention to the experience of immigration itself, and to the aid, at first halting and later generous, offered by Jewish organizations to the newcomers (including such defensively motivated schemes as the attempt to relocate some of them in the Midwest by having them debark in Galveston, Texas). He also takes note of the rise of Jewish communities outside New York, observing that immigrants often became *more* conscious of themselves as Jews in the smaller cities of the American interior than in the crowded ghetto neighborhoods of the Eastern seaboard.

The cultural flowering of the immigrant generation—the Yiddish theater, the newspapers, the poets and playwrights—is an often-told tale, and so too is the saga of the sweatshops, the gangs, the general raucousness of the Lower East Side. As the author also of *American Jewish Immigrant Radicals: The Prophetic Minority*, Sorin offers an informed picture of the emerging Jewish labor movement and its ancillary institutions, such as the Workman's Circle, which combined socialist idealism with a day-to-day practicality that eventually enabled this immigrant generation to become "almost at home in America."

Although he gives a fair account of how the three religious branches of American Judaism responded to the tide of new immigrants, the heart of the story for Sorin is the crystallization of a nonreligious Jewishness:

> Beginning in the era of mass immigration, many American Jews practiced a civil religion, achieving unity, purpose, and identity as a moral community through secular organizations devoted to philanthropy and social work and to the welfare of the Jewish people abroad. The early steps in this direction were not always consciously ideological. But the eventual development of a Jewish civil sphere—distinct from, though not necessarily antagonistic to, religious institutions—was a significant step in the formulation of an American Jewish civil religion.

IF THE development of this incipient ecumenical secular Jewishness is the *telos* of Sorin's narrative and (at least for him) the climax of the formative migrations of American Jewry, a more paradoxical state of affairs emerges in the last two volumes: the story is one of remarkable success in economic and social integration combined with unease, a sense of loss, even of dissolution.

Not growing consensus but an inability to overcome Jewish organizational and ideological differences is the leitmotif of Henry L. Feingold's *A Time for Searching*, the fourth and most assured and authoritative volume in the series. Feingold astutely compresses a myriad of technicalities into a rich narrative of the quarter-century between 1920 and 1945, moving with ease from high culture to popular culture, from the transformation of the religious scene to economic enterprise, from the travails of American Zionism to the self-denying Jewishness of figures close to Franklin D. Roosevelt.

For Feingold, the key to the forces shaping Jewish private and public behavior during these years is duality, a duality which, he writes, had "produced tensions and conflict as well as imaginative accommodations . . . in the entire American Jewish experience, but [was] particularly clear at the time when American Jewry was poised to enter the mainstream of American life."

In Feingold's account, many American Jews in the 20's and 30's can be considered a veritable "lost generation," caught between the transitional immigrant culture but as yet not accepted by a host society which had now closed its doors to further newcomers from Eastern and Southern Europe. Yet some Jewish intellectuals were al-

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ready beginning to formulate a characteristic American Jewish "attitude": the writers grouped around the *Menorah Journal*, for example, "present us with the first glimpse of what the American Jewish amalgamation would be like—less ideological, and motivated by a cerebral interest in things Jewish rather than an emotional one."

Likewise, a cadre of professional Jewish educators and the towering figure of Mordecai Kaplan—the founder of that *echt*-American Jewish movement, Reconstructionism—were articulating "an approach to the needs of secularizing Jews so that one can say most Jews were Reconstructionists without knowing it." Yet despite these new directions, there was a counter-tendency toward disaffiliation, decline in religious observance, cutbacks in Jewish philanthropy under the impact of the Depression, all within the context of an ominous growth in popular anti-Semitism.

What interests Feinberg most is political culture. Why the American Jewish "adoration" of FDR? "Not so much for his person," Feingold concludes, "as for the political principles he was imagined to represent," especially as embodied in his welfare legislation (principles long advocated by the Jewish labor movement). As for Roosevelt's cadre of Jewish advisers, these "were not Jewish men of influence, but rather men of influence who happened to be Jewish," the product of several generations of the muting of ethnic and religious affiliation.

The limited Jewishness of these high officials—some, like Felix Frankfurter, astonishingly indifferent to Jewish suffering during the war, others, like Henry Morgenthau, Jr., alert to their Jewish responsibilities—is a crucial element in Feingold's analysis of American Jewish responses to the Holocaust. This is an issue to which he has long devoted attention: why was American Jewry so impotent in the face of Nazism, especially after the news of the mass extermination reached American shores? As answer he offers a mixed bag of motives, illusions, and self-interest.

With evident approval Feingold quotes Reinhold Niebuhr's remark that "Jewish humanitarians had difficulty coming to grips with the existence of an evil so dark that it could 'undermine the characteristic credos of the democratic world.'" The lack of interest displayed by "Jewish" Hollywood in the "group-prejudice theme"; the endemic divisiveness of Jewish organizations and movements; FDR's skill in obfuscating the "refugee problem"; fears of a Nazi-like movement in America; even "the individuation and secularization that promote individual achievement while adversely affecting the Jews' ability to act collectively"—all these, in his reading, contributed to the failure to act.

The reader comes away with a conundrum: there was not much that American Jewry could have done in any case, but it should have risen to the occasion in a more decisive way. Feingold, who admits that a historian cannot require that his subjects step out of their time and place, nevertheless concludes that the community's inability to transcend itself in those years resulted in "the abiding sense of loss and guilt [that] has shaped much of its contemporary sensibility."

In the last volume of the series, *A Time for Healing* by Edward S. Shapiro (healing, presumably, the wounds of the Holocaust), we see American Jewry assuming the leadership role after World War II that it failed to attain during it. Shapiro, whose volume is to my mind the least satisfactory in the series, is congratulatory when it comes to American Jewish achievements but skeptical about the long-range prospects for cultural viability or real vitality. As icons of worldly-success-*cum*-Jewish-alienation, he chooses such individuals as Hank Greenberg, sports hero to millions of Jews who did not raise his children as Jews. A chapter is devoted to "the tale of the two Shapiros," the Harold who became president of Princeton and the Irving who became president of the Du Pont Corporation, both enjoying unprecedented access to the American social elite but neither showing much interest in perpetuating Jewishness beyond his own generation. Unfortunately, however, the Shapiro who wrote this book is arbitrary in his choices—many counter-examples come to mind—and irritatingly flippant in his tone ("Purim also became more important since it came at approximately the time of Easter"; etc.).

Still, there is much useful information in this volume, including accounts of the wavelets of Jewish immigration to America since the world war (the Displaced Persons, the Russian Jews, the Israelis, Jews from Iran, Cuba, and elsewhere); the growth of Jewish studies in colleges and universities; and shifts in Jewish population and residence patterns in the postwar era. It is surprising to realize, for instance, that more Jews now live in California than anywhere else in the world except for the former Soviet Union, Israel, and the rest of the United States combined.

Shapiro's final chapter, "The Question of Survival," summarizes the debate in the 1980's between two schools of Jewish sociologists, the "transformationists"—who argue that American Jewry is reshaping itself into something vital and distinctive—and the "assimilationists"—who from the same sets of data draw the conclusion of a severe decline in numbers, influence, and cultural identity. Shapiro straddles the fence: taking due note of the apparently inverse relationship between social mobility and a strong sense of Jewish identification, he nevertheless fleetingly suggests that Jews *might* even survive the freedom and prosperity of America.

If Jacob Rader Marcus, still productive at the age of ninety-seven, is the patriarch of professional American Jewish historiography, the leading scholar of the generation that came to prominence in the late 60's and 70's

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is Naomi W. Cohen, for many years professor of American history at Hunter College and now Distinguished Professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary. She has published important books about American Jewish figures (Oscar S. Straus); the development of American Jewish organizations (a history of the American Jewish Committee); American Zionism; reactions in America to the Palestine crisis of 1929 and 1930; and a widely acclaimed account of the achievements of German Jews in the United States in the 19th century. Her new book, *Jews in Christian America: The Pursuit of Religious Equality*,[4] which has won this year's Jewish Book Award, moves in yet another direction, which in itself shows how much is yet to be done before the interrelationship of Jewry and America is adequately understood.

Jews in Christian America is a highly original and lucid study turning on crucial constitutional issues of both practical and symbolic importance. Focusing on important court cases and legislative initiatives, Cohen describes the positions taken by American Jews and leading defense organizations from the days of the early republic up to the mid-1960's in articulating their understanding of the constitutional separation of church and state. The specific cases she discusses concern such matters as blue laws prohibiting work on the Christian Sabbath, the place of religion in the public schools (Bible readings, classroom prayer, released time to attend classes in religion in local churches and synagogues), and the deployment of crèches and other religious symbols in parks and other public areas.

It is well known that Jews and Jewish organizations have taken a leading role in promoting the strict separation of church and state in America. Cohen indicates what this vigorous advocacy has cost in terms of Jewish-Christian relations, and the problematic bedfellows that Jewish organizations have sometimes found themselves bundled with. But the real value of Cohen's study lies elsewhere. Her angle on the Jewish presence in America shows, more clearly than the usual treatments of Jews in Hollywood or the rise and fall of the Jewish labor movement, the long-range and fundamental impact that Jews and the Jewish tradition have had on American public life.

To put it briefly: as part of the enlargement and refinement of American civil liberties, the movement of constitutional law and public policy in the United States has taken a certain direction in order to accommodate the sensibility of emancipated Jews. To this extent, the interests of Jewry, at least as those interests are represented by the organizations pressing this particular issue, have thereby gained equal status in the eyes of a government which, according to its founding document, is supposed to be neutral as between religions, if perhaps not neutral to religious faith in general.

But here is the rub. Naomi Cohen keeps to herself her views on the ideal relationship of religion and the state, but she does hint that there are ramifications not yet dreamed of by American Jewish organizations and alternative paths not yet taken:

> Today, loyal separationists claim that the unrelenting Jewish fight against government identification with religion has contributed in large measure to the security, confidence, and sense of "at-homeness" of American Jews. . . . [This approach] . . . largely ignored questions about the future of Judaism. Its exponents did not consider whether their stand reinforced the pervasive secularism within the Jewish community. Nor did they admit that on the issue of secularism the community stood apart from most Americans who have continued to identify as believers and churchgoers. . . .

Other arrangements, she perhaps implies, may emerge in the future.

THE five volumes in the American Jewish Historical Society series succeed in taking a multidimensional view of social and political history, and in understanding the "layered" role played by Jewish voluntary associations, both secular and religious, in relation to Jewish adjustments to the American environment. By and large absent from this series, however, and from Howard Sachar's book as well, is a disposition to take religion seriously—religion not as the history of organizations, seminaries, or the adjustment of traditional practices to American life, but religion as the articulation of the spiritual sensibilities of modern American Jews.

And yet the future of American Jewry may well hinge on the degree of commitment which Jews muster to the intrinsic, even supernal, meaning of their Jewishness. It may be that only a critical mass of Jews convinced of the transcendent worth of Jewishness, and a Jewish leadership responsive to their spiritual needs, will be able to overcome what these volumes portray as an evermore attenuated Jewish identity as one generation gives way to another.

If that is so, several decades from now a different slant may emerge on the American Jewish past. The role of Jewish religion in America may turn out to be even more important a key to understanding that past than the sociocultural integration of waves of immigrants; and the place of Judaism (not just the Jews) in the American polity, the resurgence of traditional elements in different contexts, new modes of religious community, even serious religious thinking may overshadow some of the subjects covered in such detail in these books. As always, a moving present transforms the meaningful past.

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[4] Oxford University Press, 300 pp., $39.95.

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Shultz, Reagan, and the Revisionists

George Weigel

THE surprising election of a Democratic President in 1992, after a campaign that stressed the "stagnation, drift, and gridlock" of the Reagan-Bush years, has, among many other things, created the political and psychological space within which the liberal opinion establishment can fully indulge its craving to do some serious revisionism on the history of U.S. foreign policy in the 1980's.

Rewriting history is in vogue *sub regno* Billary, and no palimpsest is, one gathers, too absurd to contemplate. Thus, to take but one example, it was suggested on the front page of the May 9, 1993 *New York Times* that recent Republican administrations had no serious interest in human rights: a bizarre claim that would surely come as news to figures as diverse as Lech Walesa, Anatoly (Natan) Sharansky, Yuri Orlov, Vaclav Havel, Yelena Bonner, Wojciech Jaruzelski, and Augusto Pinochet (not to mention the ghosts of Andrei Gromyko and Ferdinand Marcos).

The lodestar of the new revisionism is a grim determination to deny Ronald Reagan and his policies any significant measure of credit for the West's winning the cold war. Revisionists of a more moderate kidney suggest that Reagan's Irish luck struck again, when he drew Mikhail Gorbachev as his partner for the second half of his dance card; the more radical argue that Gorbachev saved us all from the follies of Reaganism. But that the collapse of European Communism and the break-up of the Yalta imperial system had anything much to do with the policies pursued by the United States under Ronald Reagan is the judgment that dare not speak its name.

Indeed, out in the nether reaches of the fever swamps, the very notion of "winning" is regarded as unsavory. A recent essay in the *Chronicle of Higher Education* informed us that America had really *lost* the cold war, suffering as we now do from the "self-inflicted wounds" caused by a public willing "to compromise American principles and ideals . . . in the name of fighting Communism."

REVISIONIST, anti-Reagan animus sharply affected the early reviews of *Turmoil and Triumph*, the memoirs of George P. Shultz,* Reagan's Secretary of State from July 1982 until both men left office in January 1989. In her comments on Shultz's book, for example, the *Times*'s chief diplomatic correspondent, Elaine Sciolino, continued to chew the bone of the Reagan administration's "virulent anti-Communism." Not to be outdone, Michiko Kakutani, the *Times*'s daily reviewer, criticized Secretary Shultz for advancing an unholy trinity of "debatable" arguments:

> that President Reagan's hard-nosed dealings with the Soviet leader, Mikhail S. Gorbachev, effectively ended the cold war, that President Reagan was somehow responsible for the spread of democracy in the Western Hemisphere, [and] that President Reagan left America "far better off than he found it."

That these propositions are considered "debatable" (by which Kakutani really means "dubious") illustrates one of the great paradoxes, perhaps even tragedies, of the 80's: that Ronald Reagan, the most successful President since Eisenhower and the man who handily defeated the Left electorally, could not replicate those victories culturally and ideologically in the American opinion-elite and in the permanent political class. On the contrary, the 1980's saw domestic turmoil over foreign policy—embodied in the nuclear-freeze and Central American agitations—of a sort the country had not experienced since the Vietnam era. The further paradox is that the Reagan years were the occasion for the revival in the teaching centers of our society (the academy, the religious community, the prestige press, the entertainment industry) of many of the key themes of *gauchiste* Vietnam-era politics: anti-anti-Communism, neoisolationism, functional pacifism, alienation from the American experiment.

These notions, dumbed down to the meta-theme that Ronald Reagan was a dangerous ignoramus who, left to his own devices, would embroil the United States in a host of third-world proxy wars and blunder into a nuclear Armageddon with the Soviet Union, were relentlessly pressed home through the editorial and op-ed pages, the nightly network news, the newsmagazines and opinion journals, the movies and TV, and not a few pulpits and classrooms, for eight long years.

Nor was this simply a lot of journalistic, academic, and ecclesiastical hot air: it shaped the politics of both parties, and it deeply divided the Congress. George Shultz himself got a horse-doctor's dose of subtle (and not-so-subtle) anti-Reaganism (and anti-anti-Communism) less than a year into his service as Secretary of State. The scene was the Senate Foreign Relations Committee; the topic was U.S.-Soviet relations; and the time was June 1983, at the height of the fevered debate over the deploy-

GEORGE WEIGEL *is the president of the Ethics and Public Policy Center in Washington, D.C. His most recent book,* The Final Revolution: The Resistance Church and the Collapse of Communism, *was published last year by Oxford University Press.*

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ment of U.S. intermediate-range nuclear forces in Europe.

Senator Charles Percy of Illinois, the *Republican* committee chairman, fretted that Reagan had not held a summit, so that Americans and Soviets could "gauge each other to be sure there is no miscalculation or misunderstanding, and to try to better understand each other's policies." (That U.S.-Soviet conflict was largely the result of "misunderstanding"—meaning American misunderstanding—was a prominent theme in the freeze movement.) The Democratic Senator Paul Tsongas of Massachusetts wondered aloud why, since "everybody else thought there was some value to face-to-face negotiations," the Reagan administration had not leaped at the opportunity to chat up Leonid Brezhnev and Andrei Gromyko. But it was another Democrat, Senator Alan Cranston of California, then contemplating a presidential run in 1984, who made certain that the "Blame America First" position was well represented, asking Shultz to "tell us what the United States, for its part, has done to contribute to the tension that exists between the United States and the Soviet Union."

George Shultz's one-word answer to Senator Cranston—"Nothing"—presumably took the California solon aback. But it was of a piece with one of the more admirable features of Shultz's memoirs: his resistance to the notion of Reagan-the-boob-and-warmonger.

Shultz does not hesitate to criticize Reagan's presidential management style, the most charitable description of which would be "detached." Indeed, Shultz argues that it was Reagan's inattention to detail, his naive faith in several of his less competent advisers, his inability to be a good butcher when heads had to roll, and his supreme confidence in his own rectitude (coupled with his decency and an excess of compassion) that led him into the tar pits of the Iran-*contra* affair, the episode that began the Left's comeback and that nearly ruined the last two years of his presidency.

Nor does Shultz seem to have been entirely comfortable with Reagan's more bracing anti-Communist rhetoric. Though he did not disagree with the content of the proposition that the Soviet Union was an "evil empire," Shultz would not have put the indictment quite that way. But unlike others critical of the President's personal and rhetorical style, Shultz also argues that Ronald Reagan was, at bottom, a first-class political leader who saw the future—and the collapse of Communism—more presciently than many, many others.

Including his own Secretary of State, a point Shultz gracefully and frankly concedes.

As BOTH his book and his long record of public service make clear, George Shultz was (and is) a conservative. But he came to the highest position in the cabinet as a conservative who fit comfortably within the big tent of the foreign-policy establishment—an arena in which, by the early 1980's, sentiments of appeasement were forgiven more readily than exercises in moral and ideological assertiveness. Shultz was, to be sure, an unapologetic anti-Communist, convinced of the superiority of the Western democratic system on both moral and practical grounds. But it is revealing that one of Shultz's preferred images for foreign policy is "gardening"—a metaphor that he may have adopted from his great predecessor, Dean Acheson, who once said that "Statesmen are not architects but gardeners, dealing with such materials as only nature can provide."

Consequently, in office, Shultz was determined to be a conservatively-oriented, pragmatic diplomat.* He shared Reagan's sense that American power had declined precipitously during the Carter presidency; he supported Reagan's rearmament program; he stressed, from the beginning of his tenure as Secretary of State, that "strength and diplomacy worked in tandem." But Shultz, a veteran labor negotiator who had spent the Carter years in international business, disagreed with those conservatives and neoconservatives who argued that any negotiation between an aggressive totalitarian regime and a democracy inevitably and ineluctably worked to the latter's disadvantage. Rather, Shultz believed that good deals were possible when the Soviet Union understood that America had recovered its strength and its nerve; and he was prepared to deal, if from strength.

Ronald Reagan had, of course, a less conventional view of U.S.-Soviet relations: he was committed to change, indeed to political victory, rather than to the careful conservative management of the status quo. Thus, one of the fascinating tensions of Shultz's book—a tension that helps compensate for the former Secretary's rather stolid prose style—is the interplay between Reagan's intuitive or architectural sense of America's role in the world, and Shultz's preference for prudent "gardening."

Shultz makes clear, for example, that Reagan firmly believed everything he said about the Soviet Union and Marxism-Leninism being consigned to the scrap heap of history. This was not rhetorical red meat for the faithful; it was bedrock Reagan conviction. Moreover, according to Shultz, Reagan was indeed committed to the pursuit of a world without nuclear weapons—a proposal that caused consternation among both his senior advisers and his liberal arms-controller critics. (Despite their freeze fervor, the latter, Shultz acidly and accurately remarks, had long ago decided to stop worrying and love the bomb.)

Shultz did not disagree with these provocative convictions of Reagan's as long-term goals; but he does seem to have discounted their applicability as templates for the cutting and fitting of short-term policy. One might even suggest that Shultz was not unattracted to the notion that the mythical beast known as "hard-headed détente" could be an effective means for reaching Reagan's goals.

* This should not be taken to mean that Shultz was uninterested in the ideological dimension of foreign policy, especially as that expressed itself in the suffering of individual human beings. On the contrary, throughout his tenure, Shultz showed considerable interest in human-rights issues, especially vis-à-vis the Soviet Union, and was supportive of many of us working outside the government on behalf of those then called "prisoners of conscience."

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The tension between the architects and the gardeners in the Reagan administration was highest (and, Shultz admits, most exciting) during the 1986 Reykjavik summit. There, Reagan and Gorbachev seriously discussed the elimination of both nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles. But to the relief of many conventional realists and neoconservative anti-détentists, that extraordinary deal came unstuck at the eleventh hour when Gorbachev refused to permit testing of strategic-defense systems outside the laboratory.

In the aftermath of Reykjavik, Reagan was mercilessly pilloried by liberals for letting his "Star Wars" fantasies wreck arms control. Thus, Shultz's defense of Reykjavik as a "great success" that cleared the ground for 50-percent cuts in strategic nuclear weapons and massive reductions in intermediate nuclear forces is a defense mounted largely against his (and Reagan's) portside critics. Nor does Shultz's list of Reykjavik's other achievements (the inclusion of defensive systems in future negotiations, and an agreement to keep human rights on the U.S.-Soviet agenda) quite meet the conservative charge that Reykjavik might have been a disaster, had Gorbachev just said yes.*

Shultz's treatment of the Reykjavik summit is only one part of a larger argument: *viz.*, that the dialectic between Reagan's radicalism (Shultz's telling term) and his own businesslike pragmatism made for a potent and ultimately effective diplomatic cocktail. Historians will be debating that claim for decades, even centuries, to come. And no small part of the debate will turn on the question of how crucial the emergence of Mikhail Gorbachev was to the Reagan/Shultz accomplishment.

His instinctive preference for, and faith in, negotiations notwithstanding, Shultz does suggest that no significant progress could have been made with the Soviet Union so long as the Leninist gerontocrats of the Brezhnev/Andropov/Chernenko/Gromyko generation remained at the throttle in Moscow. Indeed, Shultz's relief at being able to work with men like Gorbachev and his Foreign Minister Eduard Shevardnadze is almost palpable: and, given Gromyko's personality, entirely understandable. (Someone once said that Gromyko, having been informed by Stalin that smiling was counterrevolutionary, was still waiting for the order to grimace to be rescinded.)

Yet Shultz's quite plausible claim that Gorbachev and Shevardnadze did not suffer from the more acute character deformations of their predecessors, whose formative political experience had been the purge trials of the 1930's, will not bear the full weight of argument he frequently assigns to it. For, of itself, the change in style at the Kremlin did not decisively fix the pattern of cause-and-effect in the end-game of the cold war.

Moreover, Shultz's portrait of Gorbachev is strangely out of focus, and in ways that both muddle the analysis of events and give unnecessary running room to the Gorbophiles (who are not infrequently the Reaganphobes). On the one hand, Shultz argues that Gorbachev and Shevardnadze were men from a "distinctly different mold" who knew that "change" in the Soviet system was inevitable, and even desirable. On the other hand, Shultz describes Gorbachev as a man with a "deep commitment to Communism as an ideology," whose approach was "to repair his system, not replace it." On the other, other hand, Shultz seems critical of those who argued that real change—i.e., systemic change—was impossible in the Soviet system, given the social realities and structure of late-bureaucratic totalitarianism and the ideological pretensions of Marxism-Leninism.

As things turned out, this latter group—conservatives and neoconservatives—had the theoretical argument right: Soviet Communism did not evolve and change, it collapsed. Indeed, it collapsed in part because it tried to change a bit, and could not. To revert to 80's-speak, there could be no radical economic perestroika without radical cultural and political glasnost—and the latter was impossible in a Communist society.

Did Shultz believe that? His book provides no definitive answer. Nor does he seriously engage an alternative historical construction: namely, the anti-détentist claim that the efforts to restore America's strategic position, bitterly opposed by Reagan's critics and by an unremitting Soviet agitprop campaign (the full dimensions of which are only becoming apparent now that we have access to ex-Soviet archives), badly jarred the Brezhnevite Soviet gerontocracy to the point where it felt compelled to take a chance on a "reformer" like Gorbachev—who then proceeded to set in motion internal dynamics that led to Soviet Communism's implosion.

It is also disappointing that, for someone personally and professionally committed to the cause of human rights, Shultz does not discuss the "software" side of what eventually became the Revolution of 1989 in Central and Eastern Europe and the New Russian Revolution of 1991 in the USSR—namely, the moral and spiritual awakening that took place throughout the Yalta imperial system in the 1980's, and that did so much to buttress the nonviolent and democratic character of the revolutions that toppled Stalin's imperium. A book on world politics—and especially East/West politics—in the 1980's in which Lech Walesa gets one index entry and Vaclav Havel none is, to be gentle, a little odd: not least because of the effective support provided to the "dissidents" in Central and

* A curiosity in Shultz's treatment of Reykjavik is his seeming agreement with Paul Nitze's laudatory appraisal of Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev who was, evidently, a more intelligent and flexible negotiator than the civilian Victor Karpov. At a caucus of the senior American negotiators in the small hours of the morning, Nitze, according to Shultz, said that "Akhromeyev is a first-class negotiator. Communism is a flawed system and it will fail, but Marshal Sergei Akhromeyev is a man of great courage and character. If anyone can help the USSR toward its best aspirations, he can. But he is a good man in a bad system." Five years later, it will be remembered, Marshal Akhromeyev committed suicide in the aftermath of the August 1991 coup against Gorbachev, leaving behind a note saying that the collapse of Communism meant the ruin of his life's work.

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Eastern Europe by the National Endowment for Democracy (a crucial Reagan initiative whose impact on the transformation of the cold war is simply left undiscussed by Shultz).

These latter *lacunae* are explained in part by the fact that *Turmoil and Triumph* is very much the View from the Seventh Floor: from the offices of the Secretary of State and his closest departmental colleagues. "Policy," in this book, is what the Secretary thinks and does. Accordingly, Shultz provides little insight into, or accounting of, the intellectual contributions that many other talented and dedicated people made to his successes vis-à-vis the Soviets, in the Philippine transition from Marcos to Corazon Aquino, and in the democratic transitions in Central and South America.

GEORGE SHULTZ was an honorable servant of his President and his country. His reverence for the office of the presidency, his steady temperament, his basic horse sense, and his great store of energy (one footnote simply listing Shultz's engagements for a two-week period left this reader feeling exhausted) were all important assets in an administration that, on Shultz's telling at least, was not notable for its orderly policy process. And it seems to me both appropriate and admirable that Shultz, who clearly had his differences with Ronald Reagan, nonetheless makes plain his conviction that Reagan's visionary leadership was the *sine qua non* for some of the most successful foreign policy in U.S. history.

And yet—oddly enough for a book that weighs in at just under four pounds!—I came away from *Turmoil and Triumph* wanting more: specifically, more on the ideological struggles of the 1980's here at home, and their relationship to the Reagan/Shultz foreign policy. At the very beginning of his book, Shultz writes that "the year was 1982, but the 1970's were still with us." In fact, it was the 60's that were (and are) still with us.

Think, for a moment, about the worst of the Carter legacy—the pietistic nattering about our "inordinate fear of Communism"; the leftist distortion of human-rights policy (a disaster turned into a great national strength by one of Shultz's ablest aides, Elliott Abrams); the naive misreading of the Brezhnev Doctrine and the Soviet weapons build-up; the deterioration of America's strategic position and its conventional combat readiness. All of these things—"the 1970's"—involved the playing-out of softened forms of New Left polemics during the Vietnam era.

Moreover, these neoisolationist and anti-anti-Communist theologoumena had deeply penetrated the national Democratic party, and subsequently the Congress of the United States. It was not just partisanship that motivated the endless congressional efforts to undercut the Reagan administration's rearmament program, and it was not just partisanship that led to the Boland amendments proscribing U.S. aid to the Nicaraguan resistance: it was ideology. The nuclear-freeze movement (itself the political cause of the Strategic Defense Initiative), and the pro-Sandinista, pro-Salvadoran FMLN agitations that went on throughout Shultz's tenure, were the children of the anti-America's-war-in-Vietnam movement: the difference being, this time around, that "the movement" included people who held congressional hearings, voted (or withheld) appropriations, and wielded the power of the subpoena.

The failure of the Reagan administration to conduct ideological combat as successfully here in America as the Reaganites did abroad came home to roost during the Iran-*contra* affair—which was, among other things, an inquisition aimed at discrediting the Reagan Doctrine of active U.S. support for anti-Communist/pro-democracy forces in the third world. George Shultz, at least on the record of this book, seems strangely tone-deaf to this dimension of our public life: to the fact that the 60's are still too much with us.

Recognizing that hard fact, however, and being prepared to counter it, is the key to revising the revisionists—and to defending the record of which George Pratt Shultz, a good man and an able Secretary of State, is justifiably proud.

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Law and Order

TOWARD MANAGED PEACE: THE NATIONAL SECURITY INTERESTS OF THE UNITED STATES, 1759 TO THE PRESENT. By EUGENE V. ROSTOW. *Yale University Press. 401 pp. $35.00.*

Reviewed by PATRICK GLYNN

AMERICA is not rich in elder statesmen. Few are the men still among us whose diplomatic careers stretch back to the origins of the cold war. Fewer still combine the wisdom of long experience with deep scholarly learning.

That is why Eugene V. Rostow is a national asset. A sometime Yale Law School dean and former Under Secretary of State, whose distinguished record of public service spans several presidencies, Rostow is one of the nation's most seasoned and sophisticated foreign-policy minds. He is also an elegant writer. In *Toward Managed Peace*, he has produced an important book—a civilized, sagacious, and genuinely informative meditation on American foreign policy that should be required reading for anyone hoping to think through the complexities of America's role in the post-cold-war era.

Rostow's dominant concern, like that of many responsible foreign-policy conservatives today, is to forestall America's drift into isolation. He presents both a theoretical and a historical case against the isolationist position, and he attempts to show how the isolationist "heresy," as he calls it, is based on a misinterpretation of American diplomatic experience.

Though at heart a foreign-policy realist, Rostow differs from most conservatives in attaching great importance to international law. For Rostow, peace *is* law, whether in the domestic or international realm. Peace, he writes, involves "far more than the absence of hostilities." Rather, it is "a condition of society characterized by the expectation of general obedience to the law." By law he means simply a range of prescribed and predictable patterns of behavior—"the pattern of behavior and of social relationships which a society seeks to protect, and to restore when it is disturbed, and the pattern of behavior and social relationships it hopes to achieve in the future." Just as the nation-state is a society of individuals, so Rostow envisions the international system as a society of nations.

This is not fuzzy-headed Wilsonianism. When Rostow talks about international law, he is always thinking about enforcement—and the exercise of power, including military power, which enforcement requires. His views cut across party and ideological lines. For him the concept of the "balance of power" is as potent as the concept of international law: the two are intertwined. Law-abiding states enforce the law by maintaining a favorable balance of power against aggressive regimes, using force when necessary to restore peace. He quotes Professor Ralph Goodman: "No cops, no law. No law, no peace."

Still, Rostow parts ways with many conservatives in genuinely valuing the accretion of international statute and precedent, as well as the institutions—most notably the United Nations—created to embody the international legal order. For him, international law is an evolving organism, whose growth mirrors the progress of civilization itself.

The modern phase of that evolution, as Rostow portrays it, began with the Concert of Vienna, in the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars, when diplomats first made the maintenance of peace their highest goal. "The idea that peace is a condition to be achieved by the deliberate efforts of diplomacy is one of the major achievements of modern civilization," he writes. He sees Woodrow Wilson as restoring and advancing the principles of the Concert through the proposal for a League of Nations, and he views the modern United Nations, especially in the wake of the Gulf war, as further extending this evolution toward a more lawful world order.

Nevertheless, unlike many internationalists, Rostow recognizes the limits of the UN Security Council, which often "offers the state system the unpalatable choice between unanimity and chaos in attempting to deal with threats to peace." And he acknowledges the occasional need for action outside its auspices:

> For the crucial tasks of peacekeeping . . . the state system will continue to rely on arrangements of collective self-defense like those of NATO, blessed where politically possible by the Security Council, but used without that blessing when necessary.

THERE is something undeniably appealing in Rostow's quest for foreign-policy bipartisanship. Still, as in most attempts at intellectual coalition-building, certain important distinctions are sometimes lost to view. "Foreign policies can be prudent or imprudent, wise or foolish, too active or too passive, realistic or unrealistic," he writes. "But they cannot be 'liberal' or 'conservative,' 'nationalist' or 'internationalist.'" Well, yes and no. While it is sometimes difficult to distinguish meaningfully between nationalism and internationalism, it is not so hard to tell the difference between conservatives and liberals. Almost invariably they divide on two crucial issues: the use of force and the scope for unilateral action.

Rostow sometimes misses these differences. For example, his glowing portrait of Woodrow Wilson overlooks the pernicious consequences of the American President's liberal illusions about the role of force in international affairs. (Wilson argued, for example, that the League of Nations

PATRICK GLYNN, *a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, is the author of* Closing Pandora's Box: Arms Races, Arms Control, and the History of the Cold War.

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could punish aggressors effectively through economic sanctions alone.) The disastrous disarmament movement of the interwar years owed a great deal to the influence of Wilson's liberal vision. And the misguided arms-control movement of the nuclear era—of which Rostow was, and is, a tough and sophisticated critic—likewise had its roots in the longstanding liberal confusion about the proper relation between diplomacy and force.

Even if liberal thinkers and politicians have lately come around somewhat on the question of force—many of them, for example, have advocated military intervention in Bosnia—they tend to remain mesmerized by the appeal of multilateralism. Rostow, ever the realist, is wise enough to know that allies must sometimes be cajoled into action and the Security Council shunted aside when U.S. global interests are at stake. By contrast, there remains in liberal thinking a tendency to take concepts such as international law and collective security a bit too literally, and to defer unduly to the thinking of allies or the UN. The result—already visible in the Clinton foreign policy—is, as often as not, paralysis and erosion of American global leadership.

Thus, although there is great logic and insight in Rostow's understanding of the connection between international law and peace, it requires a subtlety of mind equal to his to prevent it from degenerating into simple-minded Wilsonianism.

PERHAPS the most valuable contribution of this book lies in the author's historical explication of the growth of American self-interest. In a richly informed series of chapters tracing American diplomatic history, Rostow points out what should by now be obvious: that the isolationism of the early republic—embodied in such statements as Washington's famous "Farewell Address"—was a temporary expedient, a policy suited to the circumstances of a new, weak nation threatened by the ambitious jostlings of the European great powers. As American power and global interests grew, Rostow shows, such isolationism became increasingly less appropriate, and less tenable.

Rather persuasively, Rostow argues that in the first century of nationhood, American statesmen were (almost despite themselves) relatively good at playing the great-power game. American Presidents took effective measures to protect the possibilities for expansion across the North American continent and to prevent European intervention in the Civil War. What Americans say about foreign policy, he contends, does not always correspond to what the nation does. Public debate tends to focus on ideology, but more often than not, America has acted soberly on balance-of-power principles.

The great exception, according to Rostow, was the period of the

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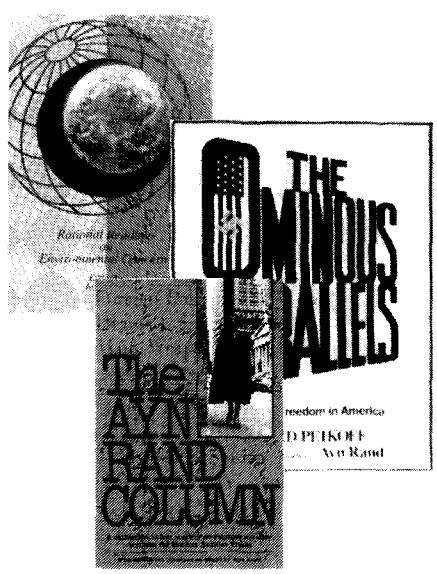

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1920's and 1930's, when the United States pursued a perverse form of isolationism, unrelated, in his view, to the sensible, interest-based foreign policies of statesmen like Washington, John Quincy Adams, or Lincoln. America, he believes, can no more afford such a policy today than it could then. With its far-flung global interests and huge "specific gravity" in world affairs, the United States has a vital stake in maintaining the general peace. "The society of nation-states," he writes, "is much smaller than it used to be, more interdependent, more volatile, and more vulnerable," while technology has simultaneously transformed "the military and policy significance of weapons and of distance—even of the sea itself." America's safety and independence can only be maintained by active engagement, including military engagement, abroad.

There is one important omission in Rostow's global framework, however, and that concerns the relationship between peace and liberal democracy. Grounded as he is in the logic of 19th-century great-power diplomacy, Rostow fails to emphasize the fundamental global division, apparent since the beginning of the 20th century, between democratic and tyrannical regimes.

Today the core of the Western security system continues to be defined by the common interests and values of the liberal democracies, and the gravitational pull that these states together exert on certain basically friendly, authoritarian regimes. In the short run, peace always depends on the balance of power; but in the long run, peace will also be decisively affected by the continuing global contest between democratic and anti-democratic forces, as it plays out in Russia and elsewhere.

One may quarrel with aspects of Rostow's vision, but it is the kind of quarrel one always learns from. This is a marvelously stimulating book, filled with telling quotations and epigrammatic statements, rich in practical wisdom and the lore of statecraft. One wishes (no doubt futilely) that Rostow's wisdom were the collective wisdom, the starting point for discussion of our post-cold-war role, for Americans would have a clearer vision of their future if they had a fuller understanding of their past. Anyone interested in acquiring such an understanding will find *Toward Managed Peace* an excellent place to begin.

Tremblers

Piety and Power: The World of Jewish Fundamentalism. By David Landau. *Farrar Straus Giroux. 358 pp. $27.50.*

Defenders of the Faith: Inside Ultra-Orthodox Jewry. By Samuel Heilman. *Schocken. 394 pp. $27.50.*

Hasidic People: A Place in the New World. By Jerome R. Mintz. *Harvard. 434 pp. $45.00.*

Reviewed by Allan Nadler

When Israel's first Prime Minister, David Ben-Gurion, decided to exempt his young country's few ultra-Orthodox yeshiva students from military service, the gesture was considered a minor concession to a tiny, fragile group on the brink of extinction, the last relics of the fossilized Judaism of Eastern Europe. But Ben-Gurion turned out to be a poor prophet. Far from disappearing, the ultra-Orthodox Jews, known in Hebrew as "*haredim*" (literally, "tremblers," from Isaiah 66:5, "Listen to the Word of God, all ye who *tremble* at His word"), have thrived and are currently enjoying the fruits of a post-Holocaust baby boom. Today, thanks to the naive generosity of Israel's founders, tens of thousands of young men and women in Israel take full advantage of the draft exemptions still accorded to religious seminary students, to the consternation and resentment of most Israelis whose sons and daughters do serve in defense of their country.

The remarkable and unexpected resurgence of Jewish ultra-Orthodoxy, both in Israel and North America, is a matter of both fascination and concern to many Jews today and has occasioned a growing literature, including these three books. Before looking at them, it would be useful to note a number of important distinctions.

First of all, despite the impressive increase in their ranks and influence, the *haredim* remain a small minority-within-a-minority of the Israeli and American Jewish communities. The ultra-Orthodox account for only one-third of all Orthodox Jews, who in turn represent less than 10 percent of world Jewry. Although precise figures are hard to come by, not least because Orthodox Judaism forbids census-taking, it is estimated that, despite their rising profile and high birth rate, Israel's *haredi* population just barely exceeds 100,000 souls.

Secondly, the world of ultra-Orthodox Judaism is itself neither monolithic nor uncomplicated. There are, for instance, ultra-Orthodox Israelis, including some members of the highly influential Lubavitch hasidic sect, whose sons are drafted. (Virtually no Orthodox girls are allowed to enter the army.) And among mainstream, non-*haredi* Orthodox Israelis, a great many are passionate Zionists who join fully and enthusiastically in their country's defense. The modern Orthodox Zionist movement, known as Mizrachi, has even established a network of unique yeshivas (known in Hebrew as "*hesder*," or "special-arrangement," yeshivas) which offer a joint program of army service and advanced talmudic studies.

Still, the *haredim* in Israel do constitute a highly visible group, physically on account of their distinctive dress, socially and politically because of their passionately held religious convictions. If, for most visitors to the "holy land," they may be something of an exotic tourist attraction, for Western Jews they are also something more: a nostalgic source of comfort and an assurance that, despite their own abandonment of the ways of their East European progenitors, the pristine Jewish spiritual past has managed to survive in the lives of these pious few.

Allan Nadler *is director of research at the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in Manhattan.*

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In *Piety and Power: The World of Jewish Fundamentalism*, David Landau, who spent twenty years covering Israel's religious scene for the *Jerusalem Post*, paints a vivid and perceptive—and unsettling—picture of the life of this community in Israel. The Orthodox Jewish world described by Landau has taken a sharp theological right turn, and this trend, along with a dramatic rise in numbers (thanks mostly to the *haredi* rejection of birth control), has produced a community now experiencing a growing awareness of its own political power. But despite its growth and political advancement, this rising religious minority remains not only fundamentally alienated from but actively hostile to majority values and culture.

The *haredim* perceive Zionism and the secular Jewish state which it produced as threats to traditional Judaism. As might be expected of a group claiming possession of transcendent and infallible truth, *haredi* thinking seems little affected by political and social reality. Although ultra-Orthodox Judaism thrives today in Israel like nowhere else, the *haredim* refuse to give any credit, let alone acknowledge any debt, to the mostly secular Jews who built the state in which they found refuge after the Holocaust, and who continue to defend it.

Even as they reject Zionist political ideology, however, the *haredim* have apparently learned much of a practical nature from the Jewish reentry into the world of politics which Zionism pioneered. Particularly in the last two decades, Israel's small but influential Orthodox political parties have mastered the art of parliamentary politics, often holding the country's fragile coalition governments hostage to their demands for increased subsidies of yeshivas and greater public enforcement of the Sabbath and Jewish dietary observances.

In a chapter aptly named "Zionist Nightmare," Landau describes the stranglehold of the *haredim* on the Knesset, perhaps best symbolized by the political clout wielded by ninety-four-year-old Rabbi Eliezer Menahem Shach, the spiritual leader of the tiny Torah Flag party. The spectacle of an anti-Zionist rabbi controlling the destiny of a country to which he holds no allegiance is yet another source of the deepening resentment of the *haredim* on the part of secular Israelis and, it needs to be added, on the part of many religiously observant Israelis as well.

The enduring hostility of these *haredim* to the state which has been their refuge and breeding ground is a deeply troubling phenomenon. On another level, though, it is hard not to admire the tenacious survival of this community, a segment of Jewry which was almost completely annihilated during the Holocaust. Moreover, this is probably the only faction of world Jewry which has not been thrown into a veritable panic by the high rates of assimilation and intermarriage which are today decimating the non-Orthodox Jewish world.

As THE sociologist Samuel Heilman notes in *Defenders of the Faith*—an anthropological foray into Jerusalem's most extreme and hermetic Orthodox sects—isolation from prewar European culture often earmarked the *haredim* for even greater destruction than that which befell other Jews:

> Had they been willing to integrate linguistically into the societies in which they found themselves instead of continuing to speak only their Yiddish, had they been more robust instead of the pale yeshiva boys who sat over books, had they been willing to change their appearance and style in line with general European culture, they might have been able to hide more easily among the Gentile population and perhaps survive in greater numbers.

But while their physical and linguistic distinctiveness may have rendered the *haredim* more vulnerable to their Nazi oppressors, their refusal to accommodate the wider culture has also been the cause of their remarkable postwar recovery. A particularly moving example is the community of Belzer Hasidim, a sect which thrived for just over a century in the Galician region of Poland. Even more vociferously

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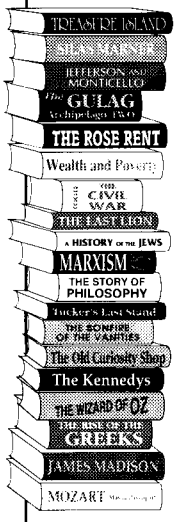

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than other ultra-Orthodox groups in Poland, the Belzers resisted emancipation and were particularly opposed to Zionism on the ground that a reestablished Jewish sovereignty in the Land of Israel must await the coming of the Messiah. In fact, the previous Belzer *rebbe* (or grand rabbi), Aharon Rokeach, absolutely forbade his followers to emigrate—either to America, which he saw as a land of religious anarchy and assimilation, or to Palestine, whose sanctity had become tainted by the Zionist enterprise.

The *rebbe*'s consistent advice to his Hasidim in the 1930's (similar advice was dispensed by dozens of other *rebbes*) turned out to be a lethal miscalculation. Although he himself did manage at the last minute to escape the Nazis—ironically enough, on a Zionist-sponsored transport of Jews to Palestine—the vast majority of his followers were annihilated, mostly at Auschwitz.

But today, the community has experienced a phenomenal renaissance, captured by Heilman in his account of the bar-mitzvah celebrations of the only son of the current Belzer *rebbe*. Thousands of Hasidim crowded the sect's Jerusalem headquarters to witness the coming-of-age of the heir-apparent. As Heilman notes, the festivities marked more than a religious rite of passage: "This was not simply a celebration of survival; it was a triumph over the Holocaust. . . . Above all else, even as they seemed to be honoring the *rebbe* and his son, the Belzers were celebrating themselves."

But have the *haredim* learned anything from their historical experience? David Landau would say no: their survivalism appears often to be purely instinctive, and they certainly do not acknowledge the catastrophic political judgments of their rabbis in prewar Europe. This is perhaps not so surprising: there are, after all, good theological reasons for the refusal to attend to the implications of history. At the very core of the *haredi* credo is an insistence on the transcendence and immutability of their faith and the impeccable wisdom of their sages. This is particularly true of the Hasidim, whose grand rabbis are believed to be directly guided by an infallible "holy spirit." Not only can the *haredim* admit no mistake on the part of their rabbis, they take special pride in their own alleged impermeability to historical change.

I say "alleged" because, naturally enough, their encounter with modernity has transformed many aspects of their lives. In the course of his "expeditions," Heilman found that in a community where photographs were once considered graven images, and hence a violation of the second of the Ten Commandments, cameras and video recorders are now *de rigueur* at all public occasions (except, of course, on the Sabbath). Regarding the surprising inroads of modernity into a sect which prides itself on its immunity to the modern world, he observes:

> . . . wherever ideology was silent, Belz had found a way to fill the ideological vacuum with the up-to-date: the newest cars, the most modern video recorders on which to photograph the proceedings, the highest-quality recording tape, the newest high-tech microphones, up-to-date halogen lamps, and (as I would later discover in Belz homes) personal computers, modern furniture and decor, and all else that was current to support their tribal activity in the most up-to-date way.

If modernity has left its mark on the *haredi* camp in Israel, it has made even deeper inroads into the ultra-Orthodox community in America. In Jerome Mintz's *Hasidic People: A Place in the New World*, we encounter Hasidim who have had to adapt to the frenetic and profane life of the world's most cosmopolitan—and hence most spiritually subversive—city. While the Hasidim of Israel may have relaxed the laws prohibiting "graven images" by purchasing cameras and video recorders, the Hasidim of New York have built fortunes by selling them: the most famous example being 47th Street Photo, the hasidic-owned electronics giant.

Politically, too, the ultra-Orthodox have made their accommodations to the "new world." Their oppressed ancestors in Eastern Europe may have maintained a deliberate quietism amid horrible persecutions, but American Hasidim are anything but passive. Even among those still professing to be anti-Zionist, the ethos of Jewish self-defense is apparently alive and well, reflected in vigilante patrols of dangerous neighborhoods and in immediate and sharp reactions to any perceived threat.

Mintz, a professor of anthropology and Jewish studies at Indiana University, describes the social and political adaptations which the hasidic community has made to American reality, and also delves into some of the more private, and subtle, changes it has undergone. There is, for example, a fascinating chapter here on the gradual if grudging acceptance of modern psychology and social work, which has dramatically improved the way the community now deals with its mentally impaired.

Most of the data in *Hasidic People* take the form of extended quotations from an impressive array of "informants" whom Mintz interviewed in the course of his research. This is undoubtedly the book's greatest strength, and it is one shared by Heilman's book as well. One cannot but be impressed by the success of these scholars in gaining the confidence of people generally so wary of outsiders.

But there is also a problem here. Mintz's informants, no matter how candid, instinctively protect the image of their community; and so, despite his own attempt at objectivity, Mintz's account of hasidic life is inevitably a censored one. Further confounding matters is the fact that Mintz's other sources are mainly journalistic and for the most part limited to the English-language press. It is hard to credit a study of a group whose *lingua franca* is Yiddish which refers hardly at all to the many books, pamphlets, and weekly newspapers produced in that language by New York's hasidic community.

Heilman's *Defenders of the Faith* suffers from similar limitations. He cites Claude Lévi-Strauss's *Tristes Tropiques* as an inspiration and

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model, but there is a crucial difference between the *haredim* and the Brazilian savages studied by Lévi-Strauss: namely, literacy. A vast sacred literature stands at the very cornerstone of hasidic life (as of all traditional Jewish life), and any primarily "anthropological" approach to that life is therefore handicapped by definition. Until Western scholars who have mastered the primary sources of Orthodox Judaism turn their attention to the *haredim* of today (as some Israeli scholars have begun to do), the English reader's understanding of "hasidic people" and other ultra-Orthodox groups will remain seriously limited.

Art (?) in America

LEAVING TOWN ALIVE: CONFESSIONS OF AN ARTS WARRIOR. By JOHN FROHNMAYER. *Houghton Mifflin. 360 pp. $22.95.*

Reviewed by WALTER BERNS

JOHN FROHNMAYER had two purposes in mind when he set out to write this book: he wanted to get even with all the enemies (or perceived enemies) he had made during the two-and-a- half years he served in the Bush administration as chairman of the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA), and he wanted to persuade us that he is not the hopeless booby he appeared to be in office. He succeeds in his first aim, but not in his second.

As "an artist in my own right"—he had sung in a church choir—Frohnmayer says he came to Washington to promote the arts in order to "enhance the quality of life in this country," only to be frustrated at every turn by the politicians. This, mind you, is the same man who begins his book by describing how he pulled every political string within his grasp to bring his name to the attention of George Bush (while concealing the fact that he had not voted for him), yet was surprised to learn that the office he won was not completely isolated from politics.

WALTER BERNS *is John M. Olin University Professor at Georgetown University.*

In *Leaving Town Alive*, at any rate, which is itself a particularly nasty political memoir in a very crowded field, Frohnmayer goes out of his way to express his contempt for politicians, and especially the Republicans among them: Bush's first chief of staff, John Sununu; Sununu's replacement, Sam Skinner; Vice President Quayle's chief of staff, William Kristol; and chief of Presidential Personnel, Constance Horner.

Few escape his venom. He suspects ("but was never able to verify") that Frank Hodsoll, his predecessor at the Arts Endowment and then a senior official in the Office of Management and Budget, conspired to defeat his budget requests; he asserts that Lynne Cheney owed her success as chairman of the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), the sister agency to the Arts Endowment, only to the fact that she was the "darling of the conservatives in Congress and the White House [as well as] the right-wing commentators"; he charges that some of his own staff plotted against him and even lied to him, and that one, Anne Radice, a "rabid conservative," was assigned by the White House "to keep an eye" on him; and so forth.

WORST of all in the Republican nest of vipers were the Republicans in Congress. He calls one of them a "lizard," another a "meathead"; he likens them to Neanderthals, to totalitarians, twice even to Hitler. They made his life miserable with their incessant complaints about obscenity, and they were constantly going out of their way to find it—for example, by seizing on a couple of lines from a poem and then denouncing him for funding the obscure journal, *Queer Nation*, in which the poem appeared.

Of course, Frohnmayer has to admit that, taken out of context, the lines in question "delivered quite a jolt." And so they did, speaking in the coarsest lanuage of how Jesus performed oral sex on the narrator "behind the pulpit/ I was 6 years old/ he made me promise/ not to tell no one."

Still, Frohnmayer suggests that, had his critics read the poem in its entirety, they could have seen that it was "a serious work of art conveying a serious message about a serious problem."

Much to Frohnmayer's dismay, they were not appeased. Especially did they object to funding the likes of Karen Finley. Frohnmayer thinks that Senator Jesse Helms (R.-NC) should have been "laughed out of Congress" for making her an issue. Why, he asks, should the idea of a performer rubbing chocolate on her naked body in front of an audience so inflame the American public? He wonders idly whether the reaction would have been the same if Finley had spread herself with "peanut butter or Crisco or oatmeal."

But he knows very well that the issue was not Finley's choice of spread, or even the scatological verses she recited as she applied it, but whether performances like hers deserved to be subsidized with tax dollars. Helms and company said no, arguing that the NEA's job was to fund art, not obscenity, and that a sensible agency ought to be able to distinguish between them. Frohnmayer said yes—actually, in Finley's particular case he made a public fool of himself by saying no, then yes, and finally no.

At a certain point, Congress found it necessary to appoint an independent commission to review the agency's grant-making procedures, and the commission, in turn, found it necessary to remind Frohnmayer that the "National Endowment for the Arts is a public agency" established to serve *public* purposes (and that the public's elected representatives were to have a role in defining those purposes).

But what public purpose, Frohnmayer's critics wanted to know, was served by an exhibition of Robert Mapplethorpe's photographs that included a picture of one man urinating into the mouth of another, or by *Queer Nation*'s blasphemous poems, or by Karen Finley's spreading herself with chocolate to make the point that, as a woman in 20th-century America, she was, as she said, "nothing but shit"? To say the least, his critics saw none; to which Frohnmayer responded with the tired cliché that the purpose of art

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is to be controversial and the no less tired argument that, as he puts it in this book, "funding of controversial art [is] not equivalent to an endorsement of the ideas expressed in that art."

After two-and-a-half years of this unseemly squabbling, the President, his patience exhausted, asked Frohnmayer to submit his resignation.

ALTHOUGH he would never admit it, Frohnmayer had only himself to blame for his troubles with Congress and the White House. No doubt some of his critics were prejudiced, foolish, in certain respects even stupid. But they were the immediate source of the tax dollars—some $175 million annually—he distributed so lavishly, and it was very foolish of *him* to antagonize them.

He did not have to do so. He could easily, and quite reasonably, have refused to fund *Queer Nation*'s poems, Karen Finley's chocolate performances, and the rest, not because they were obscene—which, of course, they were, and were intended to be—but because they were kitsch, trash, shlock, junk, not art. But it was not in him to make this point, not when his advisory panels, staffed largely by representatives of the arts community, had described these same works as "extraordinary," "uncompromising," and "mature."*

Frohnmayer regarded the arts community, not the taxpaying public, as his constituency, and knew that he would earn its scorn if he refused to endorse the judgments of the panels. As a result, under his tenure the NEA became—here I quote a *Washington Post* columnist—"an instrument for backscratching and palm-greasing within the artistic community rather than an agency for the impartial administration of public arts appropriations."

But Frohnmayer is unrepentant. He insists here that "no application that received an endorsement from a peer panel and the National Council on the Arts could be defined as lacking serious artistic merit."

Helms and company may be stupid, but they are not that stupid.

* Frohnmayer's foolishness was to have financial consequences. On June 5, 1993, it was announced that the NEA, in an out-of-court settlement, had agreed to pay Finley and three other "performance artists" a total of $252,000. Each of the artists will receive $26,000 "to compensate them for the grants that were denied them in 1990 and $6,000 to meet their claims under the Privacy Act that information about them was illegally released to the media." The remainder will go to their "overjoyed" attorneys.

Saddam & Arab Identity

CRUELTY AND SILENCE: WAR, TYRANNY, UPRISING, AND THE ARAB WORLD. By KANAN MAKIYA. *Norton. 366 pp. $22.95.*

Reviewed by LAURIE MYLROIE

"CRUELTY," the first part of this powerful and eloquent book, describes Saddam Hussein's rule over Iraq and occupation of Kuwait. "Silence," the book's second part, is the author's shorthand for the Arab reaction: support for the invasion of Kuwait, then silence when much of the Iraqi population revolted after the war only to be brutally crushed by Saddam loyalists while the victorious U.S.-led coalition looked on.

Kanan Makiya, the Iraqi-born author of *Republic of Fear* (1989, written under the pseudonym of Samir al-Khalil), here calls the Arab support for Saddam a "moral failure of historic proportions." That is obvious, but Makiya is almost alone among Arab intellectuals in saying so publicly. In writing this book, Makiya aims to help change Arab thinking. In essence, he calls on his fellow Arabs to embrace liberalism, the respect for "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" that lies at the heart of contemporary Western democracy.

The need for Arab liberalism is so pressing because the violence in Arab society has become so great. Makiya demonstrates that point through stories reflecting different aspects of Baghdad's cruelty: the genocidal campaign against the Kurds in the late 1980's; the incarceration and torture of a Sunni Arab in Baghdad shortly before Iraq invaded Kuwait; and the postwar Iraqi uprisings and their suppression.

Although Saddam's repression has long been known, far more has come to light since the Gulf war. For one thing, during their uprising the Kurds captured and released Iraqi secret-police documents. Then, too, the shattering of Baghdad's authority produced a flood of refugees with their own horror stories. And finally, the atrocities committed by Iraqi occupation forces in Kuwait, where Saddam used the same methods he had developed through two decades of Baathist rule in Iraq, have been detailed in a U.S. Army report on Iraqi war crimes.

Makiya draws on a variety of such sources for his portraits of cruelty. The March 1988 gassing of the Kurdish village of Halabja, it turns out, was only one part of a comprehensive military campaign to eliminate the rural population of Iraqi Kurdistan. The Kurdish guerrilla forces, long in opposition to Baghdad, took refuge in the mountains of northern Iraq. Saddam's solution to their challenge was to depopulate the countryside, concentrating the survivors in urban areas where they might be more easily controlled.

In this connection, Makiya tells of a tape-recording that fell into the Kurds' possession; on the tape, Ali Hassan al-Majid, Saddam's cousin and currently Iraq's Defense Minister, is heard to assert, "Where shall I put these [Kurdish] people, so many of them? So I began to distribute them across the provinces. And from there I had bulldozers going backwards and forwards [burying them]."

Makiya then recounts the story of a ten-year-old boy, Taimour, who survived such an operation. The Iraqi army brought trucks to his village and ordered everyone into them. They were taken to an army fort, where the men were separated from the women and children. Taimour, his mother, and his sisters were put on a truck, bound for the southern desert, along the

LAURIE MYLROIE *is a fellow in Arab Politics at the Washington Institute for Near East Policy and co-author (with Judith Miller) of* Saddam Hussein and the Crisis in the Gulf.

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Saudi border. Some people died on the way from thirst. When the trucks finally stopped, a half-dozen large, newly-dug holes lay before them. Taimour, along with the other women and children, was pushed into the pits. Iraqi Special Forces began shooting at them.

Taimour was still alive when the shooting stopped. He crawled out, taking cover nearby in the darkness, and before fleeing watched Ali Hassan al-Majid's bulldozers do their work.

So go the stories Makiya relates, each more sickening than the last. Even things that sound too brutal or bizarre to be credible often prove to be true. Thus, describing Saddam's suppression of the postwar Iraqi revolts, Makiya writes:

> Some rebels, *it has been alleged*, were forced to drink gasoline before being shot. It *appears* that instead of crumpling into an undramatic lifeless heap, the victim explodes and burns like a torch for a short while. [Emphasis added]

Though Makiya seems somewhat uncertain about this particular atrocity, the U.S. Army report on Iraqi war crimes in Kuwait describes exactly the same ghastly practice.

HAVING detailed the crimes committed by the Iraqi regime, Makiya proceeds in the second part of the book to describe the largely adulatory response of Arab intellectuals to Saddam Hussein. Reading these pages, no fair-minded person can remain unconvinced that there is something very wrong with Arab politics and Arab political discourse.

Why should this be so? Unfortunately, Makiya does not develop his answer systematically. Yet this issue, which lies at the very core of any understanding of contemporary Middle Eastern politics, is one that has been thrashed out endlessly in Western academic circles. Indeed, Makiya himself has participated in the debate in this country, where his main antagonist is Edward Said of Columbia University. The two have been engaged in a bitter polemic ever since Makiya, in the weeks of the postwar uprisings, called on the allies to liberate Baghdad, and Said denounced him as a "native informant" serving American interests.

Actually, however, the majority of scholars dealing with the Middle East tend to side more or less with Said in blaming the West for whatever problems it has with the Arabs. Only a minority contends that, to the contrary, the Arabs' problems are essentially of the Arabs' own making. This is the explanation to which Makiya too basically adheres, though he only hints at it in this book.

Thus, he writes, Arab opposition to the notion of individual rights reflects "a historically formed amalgam of sentiments and traditions traceable to the historical role of the Arabs in the creation and spread of Islam." This opaque formulation alludes to an argument, advanced by Fouad Ajami, Bernard Lewis, Nadav Safran, and the late Elie Kedourie, among others, according to which the Arabs in modern times have suffered the psychological consequences of the disastrous fall of Islam from its once-unchallenged position as the world's preeminent civilization. As Makiya describes the resultant condition:

> It is as though someone senses deep down that he is a failure . . . but is goaded into desperate self-assertion, first by the constant reminder of how wonderful and glorious his ancestors were; and second, by the image of apparently omnipotent outsiders.

From here derives the tendency to invent and reinvent what has become the dominant idea of modern Arab political culture, whether in its religious form (Islamic fundamentalism) or in its secular form (Arab nationalism): namely, that the Arabs are properly a unitary political community, and would be gloriously so were it not for Western imperialism.

In Makiya's words, the Arab's "very identity has become constructed in a totally negative way:

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he is who he is because of whom he hates." Hence the endless struggle with Zionism and imperialism, and the readiness to embrace a figure like Saddam Hussein. In the face of this kind of thinking, liberalism has little appeal, while apocalyptic confrontation, by contrast, holds out the promise of redeeming an Arab sense of identity and restoring Arab self-worth. Thus, as Makiya notes, the president of Tunisia's Human Rights League, which should be a preeminently liberal organization, demonstrated in support of Saddam Hussein and called on Iraq to use chemical weapons during the war.

The dominant ideologies of Arab politics obviously answer deep-seated needs; otherwise they would not be so resistant to change. But they are remote from reality and have brought much harm to those who espouse them, and even some Arabs have begun to say so. In 1990, Kuwait watched Iraq mobilize several hundred thousand troops on its border but, in the name of Arab solidarity, eschewed any appeal to the U.S., the one power that could have done something to help. The consequences of this silence have taught the Kuwaitis to think more concretely about their interests.

Similarly, Iraq was once a hotbed of Arab nationalism, but more than any other Arab population, Iraqis have suffered from nationalism gone mad. Makiya himself represents a developing tendency within Iraqi society to reject extremist ideologies for the promise of a political system that will guarantee the inviolability of the person, the most basic of political rights. One can only applaud such tendencies, and wish them well.

A QUALIFICATION: in this book, Makiya has the annoying habit of writing about Iraq's occupation of Kuwait and Israel's occupation of the West Bank as if the two bore some significant similarity. Yet the book itself makes clear the absurdity of the standard Arab complaint that the West employs a "double standard," enforcing UN resolutions on Iraq but not on Israel. Were Saddam Hussein in control of the West Bank, he would have crushed the Palestinian *intifada* long ago, with the methods described here by Kanan Makiya.

Indeed, the double standard works in the reverse direction. The Palestinians have been shown a degree of international sympathy enjoyed by no other Middle Eastern population, and they are the only group with their own permanent UN relief agency. In 1991, the same year that the State Department initially warned the Kurds, in effect, that they would not receive one dollar in aid, the U.S. gave $75 million to UNRWA, which for nearly 50 years has been dedicated to Palestinian relief.

That aside, however, this is a very important book. Anyone concerned about the modern Middle East should read and ponder it, for its implications are far-reaching.

Immoderate Moderate

RACE MATTERS. By CORNEL WEST. *Beacon. 105 pp. $15.00.*

Reviewed by ARCH PUDDINGTON

CORNEL WEST has been acclaimed as one of the most important commentators on race relations in America. He has been the subject of feature profiles in major publications and appears frequently on televised public-affairs programs. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., chairman of the Afro-American Studies Department at Harvard, has described West as "the preeminent African-American intellectual of our generation"; according to Marian Wright Edelman, president of the Children's Defense Fund, his is "one of the most authentic, brilliant, prophetic, and healing voices in America today."

Until recently, West's audience has been limited to specialists in the culture and politics of black America. In *Race Matters*, however, West, a professor of religion and director of Afro-American Studies at Princeton, is writing for a much broader public. The essays here, all of which have previously appeared in magazines and books, deal with a number of the most controversial issues of the past several years, including the Los Angeles riots, the Clarence Thomas-Anita Hill confrontation, Malcolm X, affirmative action, and black-Jewish relations.

To a certain extent, the esteem in which West is held derives from his image as a man of moderation. He is not hostile to whites, he refuses to blame all the troubles of the inner city on white racism, and he is critical of black appeals to racial solidarity. Although he pays tribute to both Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X, West seems more comfortable with King's prophetic integrationism than with Malcolm's militant nationalism. He eschews the traditional liberal calls for urban Marshall Plans, focusing instead on spiritual values and the need to revive a sense of community as steps toward racial reconciliation.

West thus presents himself as steering a prudent centrist course among liberal statism, racial exclusiveness, and the conservative stress on personal conduct. As he puts it here:

> The liberal notion that more government programs can solve racial problems is simplistic—precisely because it focuses *solely* on the economic dimension. And the conservative idea that what is needed is a change in the behavior of poor black urban dwellers (especially poor black men, who, they say, should stay married, support their children, and stop committing so much crime) highlights immoral actions while ignoring public responsibility for the immoral circumstances that haunt our fellow citizens.

But passages like this notwithstanding, West is not, in fact, the centrist he would like us to think him. Although he can issue sweeping pronouncements that suggest a breaking of ranks with today's racial orthodoxies, in the next breath he is capable of blithely contradicting these same positions. An example is his rejection of race-specific solutions, which is followed by an unequivocal endorsement of affirmative action, one of

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ARCH PUDDINGTON's *articles in* COMMENTARY *include "Is White Racism the Problem?" (July 1992) and "Clarence Thomas and the Blacks" (February 1992).*

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the most divisive race-specific policies ever enacted. He also engages in polemical maneuver—by, for instance, denouncing arguments based on race solidarity and then outlandishly citing as his single case in point the support that many blacks gave to Clarence Thomas.

WEST engages in such posturing, I believe, in order to camouflage political beliefs which are well to the Left not only of the Center but of contemporary liberalism. Although the word "socialist" hardly appears in these pages, the assessment of American society that West sets forth owes more to the Marxist tradition than to the American civil-rights heritage. West, to be sure, does not focus on social class; rather, his radicalism is intermixed with a kind of New Age politics in which the dynamics of class recede while questions of race, gender, and sexual orientation are brought to the fore. (One laughable sign of West's embrace of the "diversity agenda" is the length to which he goes to be linguistically correct, as in his reference to "Jim and Jane Crow segregation.")

But West does not try to conceal his view that American capitalism is evil. He writes of life in America as an "empty quest for pleasure, property, and power." Blacks, West contends, "reside in a jungle ruled by a cutthroat market morality" which breeds nihilism and leads, in the inner city, to an environment of utter despair.

It stands to reason that if the American economic system is intrinsically immoral, then those who accept the system have been touched by its corruption. And so it is, West believes, with the black middle class and black political leadership. He excoriates the former for having renounced the "vibrant tradition of resistance" fostered by the civil-rights movement while adopting a life based on "professional conscientiousness, personal accomplishment, and cautious adjustment." Likewise, West criticizes black political leaders for their "lack of authentic anger," and their general stance of accommodation with American ruling elites.

In both instances West's criticisms are unfair, extraordinarily so in the case of the black middle class. The traits he ascribes to black professionals are, in fact, precisely the traits required for successful lives and careers. If more Americans of whatever race were as committed to the work ethic and the idea of excellence as are West's black professionals, the country would be greatly strengthened and our racial climate vastly improved. It hardly needs to be pointed out, moreover, that these professionals represent the first mass black middle class in American history; the eyes of the nation are on their performance at work and at home, and they scarcely need the additional burden of civil-rights protest which West seeks to foist on them.

Much the same can be said for black political leaders. West presumably takes little comfort in the presence of Ron Brown, Mike Espy, Lee Brown, and other blacks in the Clinton administration, since these officials have risen to their current positions not as activist protesters but as professional politicians, and their success can thus be seen as reinforcing the notion that, in one area at least, American race relations are improving. It is precisely this idea—that the system might be working—which West seems least able to tolerate.

GIVEN his treatment of black professionals and politicians, it will come as no surprise that West has little use for black conservatives. The idea, for example, that black conservatives have been the objects of *ad-hominem* attacks earns his scorn—West has evidently paid little attention to the many, many attacks on Thomas Sowell, Glenn Loury, and Clarence Thomas in which the major point has been to deny their credentials as authentic blacks. But more disturbing is West's accusation that "the widespread support black conservatives received from conservatives in the Reagan and Bush administrations and from Jewish neoconservatives has much to do with their views on U.S. foreign policies."

Here we have a perfect example of West's style of debate. As on a number of other issues, he plays loose with the facts: while black conservatives may have written critically of the tendency among black intellectuals to sympathize with authoritarian regimes of the Left, mostly they focus on domestic controversies like affirmative action, busing, and welfare. As for their specific foreign-policy views, West stops short of asserting explicitly that support of American policy is unworthy of a black intellectual, but the implication is unmistakable in his statement that black conservatives are "viewed in many black communities as mere apologists for pernicious U.S. foreign policies."

In a passage highly critical of the entertainment industry, West disparages the "reduction of individuals to objects of pleasure" and bemoans the way our culture has been polluted with "gestures of sexual foreplay and orgiastic pleasure." One might suppose that West, who repeatedly stresses the moral dimension of the racial debate, might find common ground here with conservative critics of the liberal ethos. Yet one will search in vain for any reference to such issues as rap music, the civil-liberties movement, First Amendment absolutism, or the cultural legacy of the 60's—although other black leaders of impeccably liberal reputations have spoken out about precisely such matters. Instead, West reduces all social ills to one issue alone: capitalism, with its "sexual and military images," its marginalized youth, ruined families, and ravaged communities.

ONE of the most controversial chapters in *Race Matters* deals with relations between blacks and Jews. West himself is very much in the tradition of interracial harmony, at least among those of a progressive political stripe, and there can be no question of his harboring anti-Semitic prejudices. Nevertheless, his attempts to explain the roots of black-Jewish division are deeply flawed, evasive, and less than honest.

West accurately cites affirmative action as a major point of difference between blacks and Jews. But while observing that hostility to

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preferential treatment is less pronounced among Jews than among other groups, he adds that Jewish opposition "seems to reek of naked group interest, as well as a willingness to abandon compassion for the underdog of American society." This is tantamount to saying that Jewish opposition to affirmative action has nothing to do with concerns about fairness, democracy, or fears of racial balkanization, but is due simply to moral blindness. Nor does West recognize the irony in his reference to Jewish group interests in discussing a policy which openly places one group, blacks, above all others in the apportionment of economic rewards.

An even graver problem emerges in West's treatment of Israel. He begins by acknowledging that some blacks, by failing to grasp the "deep historical sources of Jewish fears and anxieties about group survival," have been oblivious to the "visceral attachment of most Jews to Israel." But Jews, for their part, he writes, fail to recognize what "the symbolic predicament and literal plight of Palestinians in Israel means to blacks." Because of this, blacks see the Jewish defense of Israel as a "second instance of naked group interest" and an "abandonment of substantive moral deliberation."

West then pushes this symmetrical formulation further to the extreme by asserting that black-Jewish ties were especially damaged in the 1980's by the policies of Israel's Likud government: "When mainstream American Jewish organizations supported the inhumane policies of [Menachem] Begin and [Yitzhak] Shamir, they tipped their hats toward cold-hearted interest-group calculations." Blacks, he adds as a balancing afterthought, are not guiltless, either, as when they accept the various conspiracy theories about Jewish economic power.

On almost every point, West's analysis is inaccurate, and often obnoxious as well. The comparison he draws between Begin and Shamir on the one hand and Leonard Jeffries and Louis Farrakhan on the other is absurd, for the obvious reason that the Likud leaders neither said nor did anything inimical to the interests of blacks, while Jeffries and Farrakhan have issued blatantly anti-Semitic declarations and threatened Jews who opposed them.

Furthermore, by focusing on the Likud period, West has either forgotten or is unaware of a bit of relevant history. During the 1960's, it was Israel's Labor government under Golda Meir which was the object of savage attacks by black radicals for its alleged policies of racist genocide and imperialism. More to the heart of the matter, there is no evidence that black resentment of Jews has been significantly fueled by Israel's policies toward the Palestinians, or that black attitudes toward Begin and Shamir were much different from black attitudes toward Margaret Thatcher or Helmut Kohl.

WEST's observations on blacks and Jews conform to a clear pattern: he attributes a perspective to all blacks or many blacks or some blacks which in fact represents little more than his own opinion or an opinion limited to the relatively small fraternity of like-minded black leftists. And a similar tactic is evident in West's hazy and substanceless prescriptions for change. While he is under no obligation to provide his readers with a laundry list of policy ideas, we can surely expect more than, for example, the assertion that "Nihilism is not overcome by arguments or analyses, it is tamed by love and care." But here too there may well be deliberateness behind the vagueness. By repeatedly stating that capitalism is the root cause of the American racial dilemma, and that little real change can be achieved without a fundamental reorganization of the economy, West skillfully deflects many of the crucial and divisive issues over which America is now agonizing.

Despite the artful packaging, West's ultimate message is neither new nor courageous. Indeed, were he to argue his case for socialism openly, "one of the most authentic, brilliant, prophetic, and healing voices in America today" might discover that very few were listening.

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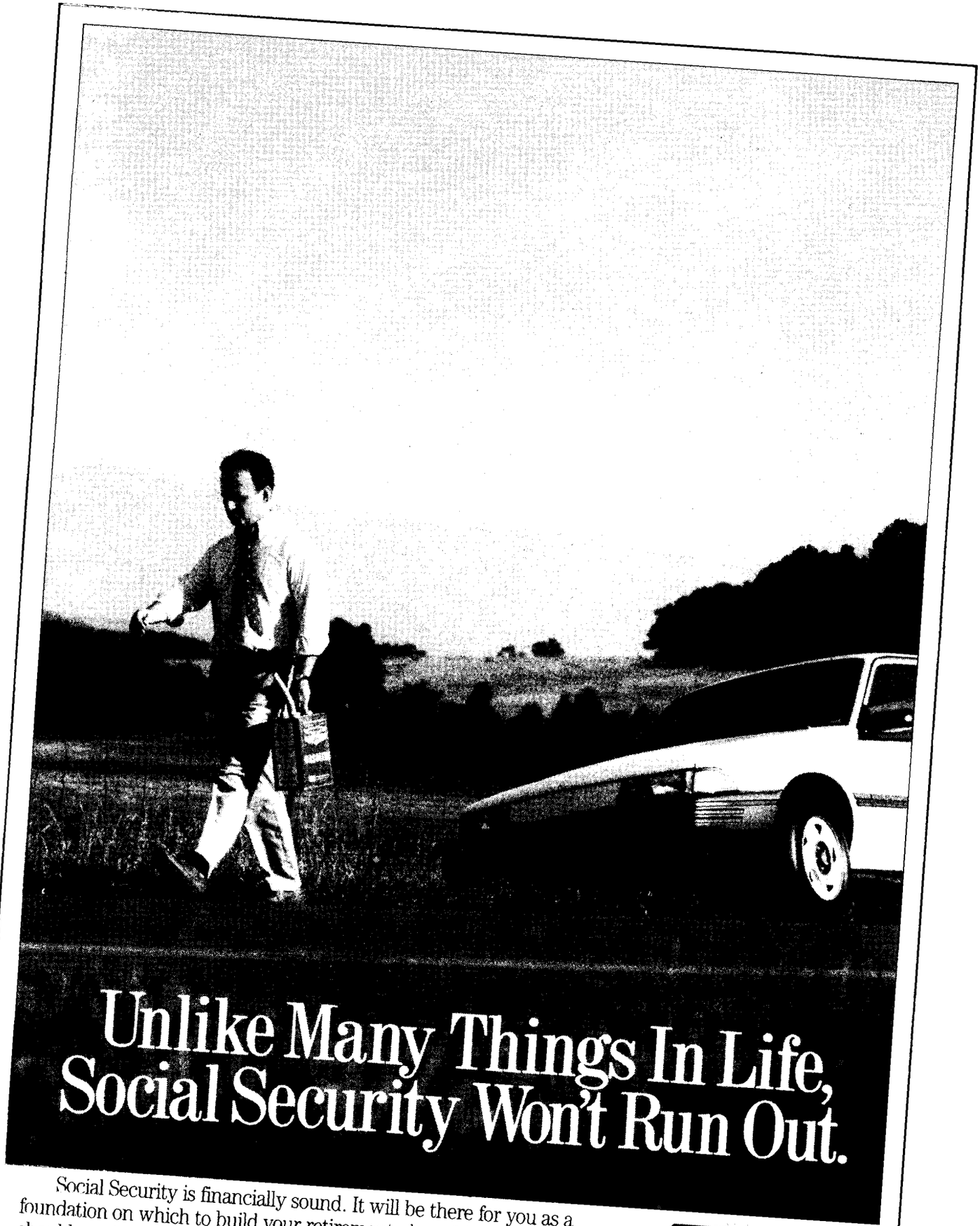

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